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Victorian values: Special supplement

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New Statesman

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Cover montage: Peter Kennard

Victorian values
Last Sunday at a meeting in Ruskin College, Oxford, organised by the *History Workshop*, historians took issue with Mrs Thatcher ppI-XVI

Civil wrongs
Tony Gifford's critique of the Tory government's record on civil liberties p.8

Ralph Steadman
Adoration of the Maggie p.9

Martin Rowson
continues his monthly series of the lives of the Great Socialists p.10

The troublemaker
Bernard Crick on AJP Taylor p.19

Whirligig
Stephanie Jordan on Laura Dean p.23

News: *Belgrano* story; Timex sit-in; MSC; Police Bill; Irish hunger strike; women's world peace; CEGB critic pp.4-6
Peter Kellner: Election bore-in p.7
Mary Holland: Street of shame p.10
John Hatton: Factories for sale p.12
This England p.12
Diary: Paul Foot p.13
Roger Woddis p.13
Anita Bennett: Women too soon p.14
Claudia Wright: French polish p.15
Jonathan Mirsky: War clouds p.16
Bretécher p.17
Letters p.18
Mervyn Jones: Literary criticism p.20
Sara Maitland: Feminism p.20
Malcolm Imrie: Anti-nuclear protest p.21
Delia Davin: China p.22
Stewart Conn: Poem p.22
Harriett Gilbert: Fiction p.23
Hugo Williams: Television p.24
Benedict Nightingale: Theatre p.25
John Coleman: Films p.26
John Spurling: Art p.26
Charles Fox: Jazz p.27
Weekend Competition p.27
Anna Coote: First person p.28
Crossword p.29
Listings p.31

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New Statesman Vol 105 No 2723 27 May 1983

Time for tactical voting

BY ANY OBJECTIVE standard the record of Mrs Thatcher's government has been one of failure. This may seem a prejudiced judgment when the Tories are still maintaining their commanding lead in the opinion polls. But it is true. Of the five 'tasks' set out in the 1979 manifesto, the only success has been with control of inflation. Even this has only been achieved by a combination of luck with world commodity prices and the deliberate destruction of whole swathes of British industry.

On the other main planks of the last election platform the result of the past four years has been disaster even in its own terms. The aim was 'to restore the health of our economic and social life' and 'to restore incentives so that hard work pays, success is rewarded and genuine new jobs are created in an expanding economy'. In a BBC *Panorama* interview in February 1980, Mrs Thatcher (slapping down an unwelcome suggestion by Mr John Biffen that the next three years were going to be tough) said: 'I don't think there'll be three years of unparalleled austerity. There will be three years of realism and three years, four years, five years, I hope ten years of opportunity.'

Mr Biffen was right and Mrs Thatcher wrong. What is more, there is no serious prospect whatsoever of any spontaneous economic recovery. The most damningly comprehensive assessment of the impact of Thatcherite economic and industrial policy was prepared this spring by the National Economic Development Office. Its conclusion, after looking at the 40 main sectors of British industry, was that there would be no growth at all in overall employment for the rest of this decade.

The government prevented the publication of this report (and other NEDO studies of industrial performance) until after the election for reasons which are clear enough. They give the lie to the claim that the four years of the Thatcher monetarist wringer have had long-term beneficial effect on the British economy. In fact, it is probable that such damage has been done to the fabric of the economy that bottlenecks and inflationary pressures will appear at an extremely early stage of any economic recovery, forcing the country rapidly into a phase of controls over prices and incomes. What is certain is that the last three years of austerity have produced no underlying improvement in the British industrial performance and productivity, which has been the altar on which the endless sacrifice has been made.

This damning judgment on Thatcherism was reinforced this week by the independent National Institute and even more tellingly by Mr Edward du Cann and his Treasury Committee. The last four years have been a catastrophic economic experiment and no recovery is in sight.

DESPITE THIS DISMAL failure – and the appalling record of the government in most other areas of domestic policy – we are, however, now faced with the fact that Mrs Thatcher has a virtually unregainable lead in this election campaign. It is an essentially *negative* lead. More than five out of ten people in this country (according to Gallup) do not think Mrs Thatcher is a good Prime Minister and more than six out of ten do not like her government. It is only such a commanding lead because Labour over the past two years has failed to present a convincingly modern and radical appeal to the public. This has been above all true of its failure to engage the young and others most directly affected by Thatcherism.

The unpalatable fact for the next two weeks – whatever the substantial merits of the Labour Party's current manifesto – is that there is effectively no chance of the party being the largest single party in the next House of Commons, let alone having an overall majority. The priority now must, therefore, be much more limited. It must be to deny Mrs Thatcher her goal of a working majority large enough for her to railroad through another five years of new rightism.

Given our electoral system this can only mean tactical voting to maximise the anti-Thatcher vote. The proposal will be anathema to traditional party activists. It will certainly be dispiriting to the candidates and active supporters of parties without any real hope of election. But, given the present political reality, the hope of an election result leading to an anti-Thatcher coalition (or at least one where a second general election would be forced within a short period) is the only hope available.

The arguments against tactical voting are strong. Any reduction in Labour's total popular vote is damaging. Not supporting individual Labour candidates this time equally damages the party's future prospects in those constituencies. But the current political crisis in our view is overriding. To stop Thatcherism in its tracks is a national necessity.

In practical terms this means that those who would normally vote Labour should vote for the Liberal or the Scottish National candidate in at least the constituencies listed below. Supporters of other parties who are equally concerned to stop Thatcher should correspondingly be encouraged to vote Labour, where that is the only realistic chance of stopping the Tory candidate.

Key tactical voting targets

Vote Liberal

Bath, Brigg & Cleethorpes, Chelmsford, Cheltenham, Cornwall North, Cornwall South East, Devon North, Gainsborough & Horncastle, Gordon, Hereford, Leominster, Liverpool Mossley Hill, Montgomery, Newbury, Pudsey, Richmond & Barnes, Salisbury, Saffron Walden, Southport, Teignbridge, Wiltshire North, Yeovil.

Vote SNP

Angus East, Argyll & Bute, Banff & Buchan, Galloway, Perth & Kinross, Tayside North.

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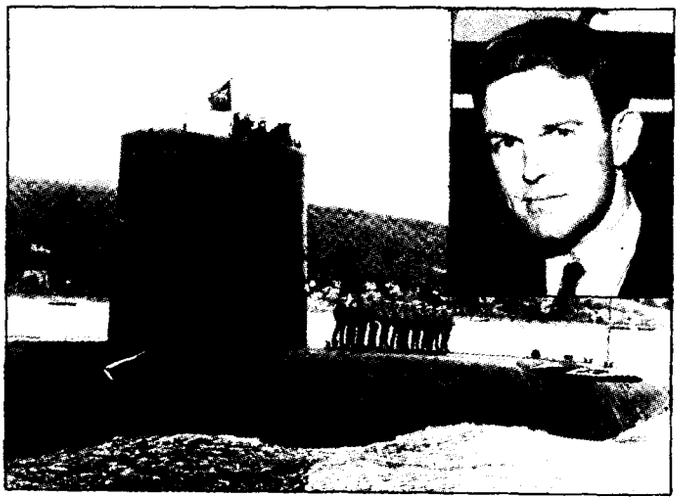
Submarine commander supports Belgrano charge



HMS *Conqueror*: did it sink the *Belgrano* for 'political' reasons? (Inset: Commander Wreford-Brown).

THE GOVERNMENT's account of the sinking of the *General Belgrano* has been contradicted by the captain of the nuclear submarine which torpedoed the Argentine cruiser on 2 May last year. He says he detected the *Belgrano* 24 hours before the government says he did.

This emerges in an interview in a book called *Our Falklands War* by Geoffrey Underwood, published last week, which supports allegations made by Labour MP Tam Dalyell that the *Belgrano* was sunk to sabotage a peace formula being worked out by the Peruvian president. Dalyell said it was 'the view of the crew to whom I talked' that the submarine detected the *Belgrano* on Saturday 1 May.

The official version of events, contained in a statement by the then Defence Secretary John Nott on 4 May, was that the *Belgrano* was detected on 2 May, only an hour before she was torpedoed. This was repeated in the government's white paper *The Falklands: Lessons of the Campaign*, published in December 1982, although the exact time of the *Belgrano's* detection was not given.

But the captain of the submarine, Commander Christopher Wreford-Brown, says: 'We located the *Belgrano* on our passive sonar and sighted her visually early on the afternoon of 1 May. We took up a position astern and followed her for over 30 hours. We reported that we were in contact with her.' The *Belgrano* was sunk on the afternoon of 2 May with the loss of over 300 lives, 20-40 miles outside the 'total exclusion zone'.

This contradicts John Nott's attempt to depict the sinking of the 'heavily armed' *Belgrano* as a defensive reaction to an immediate threat and undermines Margaret Thatcher's angry rejection two weeks ago of Dalyell's allegations: 'The *Belgrano* was sunk for military reasons and the threat was real'.

The only explanation for the long gap between the sighting of the *Belgrano* and its sinking can be that Mrs Thatcher's war cabinet, meeting at Chequers, took a political decision to fight rather than to negotiate. Sir Terence (now Lord) Lewin, chief of staff, said in an interview on *The World at One* in January this year: 'Communications with nuclear submarines are not continuous and 100 per cent, because this would restrict the nuclear submarine's operations. But on this occasion, the communications worked very quickly.'

He claimed it was 'a matter of hours' between the time the *Belgrano* was sighted and the time it was sunk. We asked the Ministry of Defence if they could explain who was telling the truth. 'We can't go further than what has been said in Parliament,' they said. As Commander Wreford-Brown has not said anything in Parliament, did this mean he was mistaken? 'No, we're not saying that.'

John Rentoul

Clocking on at Timex

TO THE sound of bagpipes and amid much celebrations, the Timex workers ended their six week sit-in at the Milton plant in Dundee by staging a mass exodus early last Thursday morning. Local trade union leaders have won important concessions in their fight against compulsory redundancies. Management have been forced to adopt a more flexible policy so that the 425 redundancies still to be found are being sought not only in the Milton plant but also in Dundee's other main Timex plant in Camperdown. It is thought that there may be at least 300 workers here willing to leave.

If, however, the required number of job losses cannot be achieved voluntarily within the agreed 90-day period, there could be further problems. A return to forced redundancies would provoke further industrial action. If Timex achieves the full 2,200 redundancies, the workforce in Dundee will have been more than halved since the beginning of the year.

Mangement have agreed to withdraw the dismissal of all those involved in the sit-in and to reinstate them on full-time work for a minimum of 12 days while talks on redeployment and retraining take place. Given the unions' firm belief that one of the company's main objectives had been to ensure that the Milton shop stewards were among those given the sack, this amounts to a significant victory.

But the unions involved – AUEW (engineering section) and AUEW (TASS) – admit that they have failed in their aim of retaining a watch-making industry in Dundee. They point out that fighting a multinational's plan to shift production to France, where there was the attraction of a £55 million minimum government grant, was doomed for as long as the British government refused to invest in British industry.

The occupation at its peak involved 580 workers, although by the end only 320 were left – a decline that sit-in leaders attribute to intimidation by management, economic pressure and the vigorous propaganda campaign conducted against the sit-in by Tory MPs and the local D.C.Thompson-owned press. Management wrote twice to those on the sit-in warning that they would forfeit redundancy pay and other rights if they continued with their action. The company was also pursuing court action in an attempt to evict the occupiers. Attacks on the workforce by senior Tory MPs, such as Alex Fletcher and at one stage Mrs Thatcher, increased in stridency over the six weeks, while the *Beano's* stablemates, the *Dundee Courier* and *Evening Telegraph,* kept up a remorseless barrage of criticism.

In contrast to the Plessey sit-in last year, there is no legacy of bitterness between local and national union representatives, although there were some misunderstandings. The ten-point plan agreed in London between senior Timex officials, Gavin Laird, General Secretary of AUEW (TASS), was at first overwhelmingly rejected by the occupiers. Sit-in leaders, backed by the vote of the workforce, then engaged in a hard day's negotiations with local management, getting the guaranteed 12 days' work for the occupiers. The workforce voted unanimously to accept the new package and gave the shop stewards a standing ovation.

When asked to highlight the crucial factor in the campaign, Joint Union Committee Secretary Jim Tinney chose good communication between shop stewards and the workforce in order to counter the negative propaganda. Committee Chairman Gordon Samson pinpointed historically good union organisation and the support of the wider labour movement. Labour-controlled Dundee District Council had immediately given £10,000, a donation of £5,000 was received from the special Upper Clyde Shipbuilders' fund, as well as £400 from delegates at the recent NUJ conference in Dundee. Both men believe that the Timex struggle shows, yet again, that if workers are prepared to act in defence of their jobs, they can at least win something.

Rob Edwards

Unmentionable Community Programme

OVERCOME by an uncharacteristic wave of coyness, the Manpower Services Commission has cancelled all publicity for its controversial Community Programme until after the election.

The £574 million programme to help the long-term unemployed was launched last year amid a blaze of MSC propaganda, including a splash Saatchi & Saatchi advertising campaign. The MSC aims to find 130,000 year-long placements, principally with local authorities and voluntary organisations, by next October. Although it still has 90,000 of those places to find, the MSC is doing all it can to keep quiet about the Community Programme during the election campaign, to avoid the embarrassment of facing its political critics.

In a recent memo to Community Programme staff, the MSC has banned all forms of promotion for the Programme, forbidden meetings involving political groups and also advised against completely open meetings in case 'the discussion gets out of control'. Many local authorities and trade unions early on refused to co-operate with the Programme because they saw it as offering a form of cheap labour,

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paying participants an average of £60 a week. The MSC's memo warns in particular against making any public statements about these 'external attitudes' to the Programme.

Such procedures, claims the still open MSC press office, are 'standard practice' during an election campaign. But local MSC staff have found the restrictions far more severe than in the past. At at least one Jobcentre, staff have been told informally not to put Programme vacancies in the window display, and one official has been told to cancel a meeting at a hospital to discuss resettlement schemes for inmates.

The Youth Training Scheme has not been subjected to these 'standard restrictions.' Unlike the Programme, the YTS is not very controversial – and is central to the Tories' claim that they are helping the unemployed. According to the MSC it has received a special dispensation from all the political parties to continue promoting the YTS during the election campaign.

Donald Hirsch and John Yates

Old Bill: the fight goes on

OPPONENTS of the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill, giving police much greater powers to collect evidence, are continuing to organise against the Bill, although it officially died when Parliament was dissolved.

At a conference of the National Campaign Against the Police Bill held in Hackney on 15 May, it was unanimously agreed that the Campaign would try to set up 'an action alliance of the black community, campaigns such as CND, the Labour Movement, Women's Movement and the Movement for Gay and Lesbian Rights' to oppose the Bill or any similar measure.

If the Tories win the election, their manifesto makes it clear that the Bill would be re-introduced. The Labour Party has not made policing policy an important part of its electioneering so the Campaign is organising widespread leafletting and speakers, with the aim of alerting people to 'the increased fascist tendencies of the state'.

A national demonstration against the Bill had been planned for Sunday 22 May in London. The GLC dropped its support once the election was announced, and there was disagreement among other supporters over whether or not the demonstration should go ahead. In the event, 500 people turned up and marched with a heavy police accompaniment but without incident. Speaking in Hyde Park, A. Sivanandan of the Institute of Race Relations criticised 'reactionary forces' for not supporting the demonstration.

Nigel Tesane

MISCELLANY

Gone missing

Moles within the Ordnance Survey have sent us a most interesting secret manual which lists and defines the places in Britain which do not officially exist, and therefore cannot appear on maps. The manual reveals that rewriting geography is even trickier than rewriting history. For example, the Ordnance Survey has a system called SUSI whereby anyone can order aerial photographs or highly detailed survey diagrams of any area that takes their fancy. What if some CND enthusiast were to order a full-scale diagram of a nuclear weapons installation? That sort of establishment is graded 'S', the notes reveal; the Ordnance Survey must ensure that such super-secret places vanish. Even trees must be annihilated.

Other vanishing sites are coded 'U' and 'F'. They can appear on maps, but not with a true description: one example is a nuclear bunker near Leeds which is marked

implausibly as a 'warehouse'. 'U' and 'F' sites include British Nuclear factories, diplomatic, British Telecom and GCHQ radio stations and even government-owned civil oil terminals.

If someone orders a map containing an 'S' site, obviously they won't get the real map. But it is also forbidden to provide a map with great blank areas – because that would reveal the presence of an 'S' site. There is no offical answer to this problem. All requests are referred to a Technical Security Section, which presumably acts as a Department of Everlasting and Inconsequential Correspondence – after all, if clients were even to be told that they couldn't have the map, that too would reveal the existence of an 'S' site. Perhaps Miscellany readers might care to ask the Ordnance Survey for a SUSI supply of their favourite top-secret picnic spots. Prizes will be awarded to readers who, after the tenth round of correspondence, have obtained neither the map nor confirmation that they can't have it.

Burglar alarm

Melina Mercouri was on her best behaviour in London this week, avoiding any controversial utterances on the subject of the Elgin Marbles. The same cannot, alas, be said of her opponents. After her lecture at the ICA on Sunday night the Director of the British Museum, David Wilson, was asked whether he would now allow her to be filmed by Thames TV in front of Those Marbles. 'Of course not,' he replied. 'You don't invite a burglar in to see the silver when he is about to take it.'

But we must watch our step. David Wilson is something of a dove compared with the other bigwigs at the British Museum. Hardest of the hard-liners among the museum's trustees is one Graham C. Greene, who has described Greece's demand for the marbles' return as 'a crazy proposal'. When not fighting off marauding Greeks, Greene is the chairman of the *New Statesman*.

Red scare

Consider the following: 'When James Baldwin was talking to me about the problem of being black, I said: "Unless you're born like me, red-haired, left-handed and a Roman Catholic, there's nothing you can tell me about prejudice".' Paul Johnson, of course, talking to the *Sunday Times* last month. Now mark the sequel. Tuesday's *Daily Express*, condemning Labour protests about the Tories' 'black or British' poster, announced that 'it is as stupid and dangerous to single out "coloured" people for "help" as it would be to discriminate in favour of red-haired men or one-eyed Jewish negroes.' Why this sudden Tory interest in red hair? Are there votes in it? It cannot have escaped your notice that the shadow cabinet's only red-head, Neil Kinnock, is going bald (despite his attempts at a Bobby Charlton-style cover-up) while the Prime Minister, whose looks are naturally white, has added a distinctly reddish tinge to her hair-dye. What can it all mean?

News values

The unashamedly white-haired heart-throb of nuclear disarmers, E. P. Thompson, is trying to revive what was once a splendid tradition before Victorian values made politics dully respectable. He is hard at work writing a pamphlet on liberty, free speech and other stirring subjects, which is expected to go into instant production for sale next week.

He might address a few of his words to the free-speaking BBC. The *leading item* on Radio 4's 10 a.m. news bulletin this Tuesday ran as follows: 'In the election campaign, traffic held up Mr Peter Shore on his way to appear on the BBC's *Election Call* programme. He arrived 20 minutes late.'

Gory tale

Hats off to Ben Wedmore, who is standing for the Belgrano Blood Hunger Party in Mrs Thatcher's constituency of Finchley. His policy is a simple one: 'The true nature of the Conservative Party is represented by the fact that the Belgrano was sunk not for military or political ends but out of lust for blood.' He tells us that he won't be doing any canvassing 'because I'm a student and I've got finals between 31 May and 16 June'. He hopes to attend the count on 9 June but may not make it 'because I have an exam the next day'. We shall watch the result with interest.

Question time

Never afraid to kick a political movement when it's down, we offer this week some quotes from leading members of the Liberal/SDP Alliance. Try putting a name to each quote – and, for a bonus mark, make a stab at the date. Our source is the ideologically disgraceful but factually invaluable *Conservative Campaign Guide 1983*.

1: 'Speaking for myself, I do not want a new Centre Party, I want a Labour Party refreshed by new thinking.'

2: 'There has been a lot of talk about the formation of a new Centre Party. Some have even been kind enough to suggest that I might lead it. I find this idea profoundly unattractive . . . I do not believe that such a grouping would have any coherent philosophical base.'

3: 'At present the Liberal-Social Democratic Alliance occasionally looks too much like a halfway house on the old road of state socialism . . . Such compromises may win votes but they will not improve the country.'

4: 'The joint rating of the two parties is now no higher than I would have expected the Liberal rating to be had the SDP never been formed . . . Some of us have always felt that the Social Democrats in the Labour Party were its great white soft underbelly, and we retain doubts about the strength of their backbones.'

Answers on page 6.

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Hunger strike in fourth week

A YOUNG IRISHMAN named Nicky Kelly has been on hunger strike in jail in the Republic since 1 May because he refuses to spend the next ten years of his life in prison for a crime which he insists he had nothing to do with, and for which the two other men accused with him have been released.

Over its seven-year history, the case has caused acute embarrassment to successive governments in Dublin, not least through the publicly expressed concern of Amnesty International. Amnesty recently visited Dublin again to investigate Kelly's case further.

Nicky Kelly was one of three members of the Irish Republican Socialist Party (IRSP) convicted of robbing the Dublin to Cork mail train of £250,000 in March 1976. The convictions were based on statements made by the three after they had been held incommunicado for several days, deprived of sleep, and subjected to successive interrogation sessions of up to 13 hours long.

At the time, a Fine Gael coalition government was in power with a notably tough line on terrorist crime. Allegations of a 'heavy gang' operating within the Irish police force drew the attention of Amnesty International and embarrassed the government. The present Irish Prime Minister, Garret FitzGerald, was a member of the cabinet then and the Minister of Justice at the time, Patrick Cooney, is now FitzGerald's Defence Minister. Because Fine Gael is known as the 'law and order party', civil libertarians fear that the present government would rather let Kelly die than back down on his case.

At the trial of the three IRSP members, they told the Dublin Special Criminal Court that they had been severely beaten and had only made confessions 'to stop the brutality', Medical evidence, including that from prison doctors, supported their claims, but the prosecution dismissed their injuries as being self-inflicted.

The judges, who sit without any jury, ruled that the statements were admissible as evidence. Ten days later, as the longest trial in the history of the Republic drew to a close, Kelly jumped bail and fled to the United States. He was found guilty in his absence, and sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment. His two co-accused, Osgur Breatnach and Brian McNally, received 12 and 9 year sentences respectively.

The Provisional IRA later issued a statement claiming the train robbery as one of its own 'fund-raising' efforts. Breatnach and McNally were released when the Appeal Court quashed their convictions in May 1980, not satisfied that their statements were voluntary.

The following month Nicky Kelly returned from the USA to clear his name, but was immediately re-arrested and ordered to serve his 12-year sentence. The Appeal Court upheld the conviction, and its decision was endorsed six months later by the Supreme Court.

As the legal channels of appeal were exhausted, Kelly announced his intention of going on hunger strike. He is still suffering the physical and mental effects of his ill-treatment in custody, according to those who have visited him. He was persuaded to postpone his hunger strike, however, while Amnesty International, the Irish Council for Civil Liberties, and others set about persuading the Irish Minister for Justice to release Kelly, as he can under Article 13.6 of the Irish constitution.

But Justice Minister Michael Noonan stated in the Dail in February that he did not think it proper to call into question the conduct of the case by the courts. Nicky Kelly began his hunger strike on 1 May.

In a letter to one of his supporters in England, Nicky Kelly said: 'The position was not reached lightly, but it was inevitable once the state took the position that they were not going to release me and were prepared to brazen out the protest and concern of human rights and civil liberty groups.'

Des McGuiness, of the Dublin-based 'Release Nicky Kelly Committee', is convinced that the reason Kelly is still in jail is because 'to release him could possibly reopen the whole controversy and remind people of the political climate which existed at the time of his arrest.'

A. Harcup

Maggie Murray/Format

Women's world peace

This 'die-in' at Camden, North London, was one of hundreds of events which took place on Tuesday in celebration of International Women's Day for Disarmament. A group of women moved into the New Statesman*'s offices for the day, using the telex and telephones to take down reports from around the world. 'We're totally amazed,' one of them said. 'In England alone something like 600 different places have been taking action.'*

In Cardiff, women held a picnic in front of the castle before heading for the Royal Ordnance Factory. In Glasgow, women blockaded the army and navy recruiting offices. In Leeds, a ceremony of mourning was held by the war memorial. At Liskeard, Cornwall, a mock 'nuclear siren' was sounded in the morning, after which nuclear shelters were built in the main street; women there also toured the fire station, hospital and schools, asking how they would cope in a nuclear war. Three of the Liskeard women were later arrested; another 15 women were detained in Oxford after a 'die-in'.

One of the co-ordinators drew attention to the involvement of trade unions, 'which we haven't concentrated on before now'. At least nine unions had sent information about the day to their branches and had agreed to back members who took the day off.

Messages from abroad came in throughout the day. In Washington DC, a lobby of Congress was followed by a parade to the White House. Japanese women protested outside the British Embassy in Tokyo. A women's peace cabaret was held in Harare, Zimbabwe, while thousands of women rallied in Auckland, New Zealand. A telex from Australian senator Ruth Coleman sent 'full support to Greenham Common sisters'.

Helen John, from the Greenham peace camp, said that the high level of activity showed that 'reports of gloom and despondency at the peace camps could not be further from the truth'. The Greenham spirit, she said, 'has spread throughout the world and cannot now be stopped.'

Critic of CEGB threatened with sack

DR ROSS HESKETH, the Central Electricity Generating Board research scientist who recently told the press he was being harassed because of his views on plutonium, has now been threatened with dismissal and refused an expected pay increase.

The *New Statesman* has learnt that, following a disciplinary hearing last month, the CEGB has formally reprimanded Dr Hesketh for talking to the press, warning that, if he does so again, he will get the sack. He has also been told that he will not receive the usual annual pay increment as his performance over the past year has been unsatisfactory.

Dr Hesketh, a senior manager at the CEGB's Berkely Laboratories, has been deeply engaged as a private citizen in the public argument about the military use of civil plutonium. He has asserted that about 3 or 4 tonnes of plutonium from Britain's Electricity Board nuclear reactors have in the past been used in American nuclear warheads, in spite of government denials. He has suggested that no more nuclear power stations should be built until the international safeguards meant to prevent the diversion of civil plutonium to military uses have been radically overhauled.

He has published two major papers on the issue and, following the *New Statesman* report of his most recent work (*NS* 4 February 1983), he agreed to appear on BBC Radio's 'The World This Weekend'. Alongside other critics, he reiterated on the air his belief that the government and the CEGB have misled the public over the uses of plutonium.

A few days after the radio broadcast, he was summoned by the CEGB and accused of poor personal discipline and of breaking the rules governing the publication of documents. He later told the *Observer* and the *Guardian* that he had been subject to a 'Kangaroo court' and that he was in no doubt that he was really being tried for his very public criticsm of the links between nuclear power and nuclear weapons. He said that management were trying to shift him sideways and reduce his responsibilities.

Dr Hesketh, having unsuccessfully appealed against the disciplinary action internally, is now understood to be taking his case to ACAS for arbitration.

Rob Edwards

Answers to Question time, p.5

1: Shirley Williams, 3 February 1980; 2: Roy Jenkins, 9 March 1973; 3: Jo Grimond, October 1981; 4: John Pardoe, 20 September 1982.

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ELECTION '83

PETER KELLNER, Political Editor

Mrs Thatcher corners the non-political vote

MRS THATCHER'S ELECTION campaign strategy has now become clear. She wants to bore her way to victory. By this I do not mean 'pierce or penetrate with a revolving tool' (OED definition one) but 'make a person feel tired or uninterested by being dull or tedious' (definition two). Mrs Thatcher wants to numb voters into fatalistic acceptance of the status quo.

There are broadly speaking two sorts of general elections: political ones, and non-political ones. In political elections voters perceive a clear choice and follow the campaign eagerly, while politicians themselves convey enthusiasm for and passionate conviction in their case. Examples of such elections are 1945, 1964, February 1974 and 1979. Each time the government lost.

In non-political elections, governments succeed in dulling people's senses and persuading them that the best thing for all concerned is to vote to let the government carry on. Ministers assume a tone less of enthusiasm than of reassurance. Opposition leaders try to destroy government complacency, but end up seeming wild and dangerous. Macmillan in 1959 ('You never had it so good'), Wilson in 1966 ('You *know* Labour government works') and again in October 1974 neutralised their opponents this way. Each time the government increased its majority.

So far this has been a classic non-political election. The Conservatives produce – by Thatcherite standards – an anodyne manifesto. The Prime Minister herself, for all her identikit abuse of Labour policies, at each morning's press conference at Conservative Central appears to regard the assembled journalists and TV crews with an attitude that varies from tolerance to contempt. She treats her ministerial colleagues on the platform in much the same way. 'Is there *anything* you want to add, Kenneth?' (Clarke, the health minister) she asked during Tuesday morning's session on health policy after she had answered the question herself (she usually does, whatever the subject). Her question to Clarke demanded the answer, 'No, Prime Minister'. Mrs Thatcher quite evidently regards elections not as the exciting climax to the democratic process, but as a mildly irritating distraction from the business of running the country.

In 1979 Mrs Thatcher won office with sharp language, ('Labour isn't working'), firm promise (lower taxes; selling off public enterprises) and a vigorous, challenging campaigning style. This year the language is fatuous ('Britain strong and free'; 'the resolute approach'; '*genuine* jobs'), the promises almost non-existent and the campaigning style noticeably laid back. She has the bearing of someone shaping up less to a feared antagonist than to a lame wasp.

AT A TIME when the economy is in deep recession and more than three million people are without jobs, it seems remarkable that Mrs Thatcher should seek to conduct her campaign in this way – and even more remarkable that she should be appearing to succeed.

Or, on reflection, perhaps not so remarkable. Last year's Falklands war anaesthetised British politics, and the anaesthetic has not yet fully worn off. The poll ratings for the Prime Minister and the government, which were extremely low before the Falklands, have settled at a much higher level ever since. There is nothing about the state of the British economy to warrant this. To be sure, more people have been optimistic this spring about the economy than at any time since the recession began; but for the past year fluctuations in economic optimism have not been reflected in fluctuations in the government's or Mrs Thatcher's approval ratings. The state of the economy – or, to be more precise, the *perceived* state of the economy – has had little or no effect on the fortunes of the different parties.

This provokes the question, *why* has the Falklands anaesthetic not worn off? There is, after all, no evidence that any except a tiny minority of people *consciously* consider the Falklands today when deciding which party to support.

My belief is that the roots of this non-political election campaign were laid in 1981 – well before the Falklands. That was the year when both Labour and the Conservatives became unpopular, and the Liberal/SDP Alliance became the country's most popular political force. A great deal of evidence from that time – much of it analysed in this column – showed that most Alliance voters had little or no knowledge of what the Alliance stood for, and shared few of the policy aspirations of David Steel and the Gang of Four. Alliance leaders claimed that they had captured a whole new set of political enthusiasms in the electorate. In truth, they had achieved something very different: they had cornered the market in the non-political vote.

By the Spring of last year, this shallow, negative support for the Alliance was already beginning to wear off. But before party warfare could resume its more normal course, the Argentines invaded the Falklands. The war that followed gave the Conservatives their chance to present themselves as the party above politics. They cornered the non-political vote and have held on to most of it ever since.

The rhetoric used by Mrs Thatcher and her colleagues to sustain that position has been nothing if not skilful. When the slogan 'the resolute approach' appeared over the platform at the Conservative Party conference last October, it not only reinforced the image of Mrs Thatcher's determination during the Falklands crisis; it also set the tone for all that has followed. The essence of the Tory message for the past nine months has been: 'We're not interested in *politics:* that's what our opponents dabble in because they've got nothing better to do. Anyway, it's politics that's got Britain into all this mess in the first place. We're above all that. What we're doing is getting on with governing the country. Yes of course there are all sorts of decisions that have to be taken; but you needn't bother your poor little heads worrying about the details. Trust us to use our common sense, and we'll make the right decisions on your behalf.'

So far this strategy has worked. And Mrs Thatcher seems determined to pursue it right through the present campaign. She positively relishes in *not* making forecasts or promises. 'Prime Minister,' a journalist asked at one of her morning press conferences, 'when would you expect unemployment to start falling significantly under your policies?'. 'It's not up to the government,' she replied, 'it all depends on companies making the right goods at the right prices. When that happens we'll see jobs – *genuine* jobs – being created.' 'In the last four years,' asked another journalist, 'prescription charges have risen from 20p to £1.40. Can you give an assurance they won't rise again after the election?' Mrs Thatcher: 'No government can possibly give any such assurance. It would be totally irresponsible.' And so on.

It is not easy for the opposition parties to combat this style. In previous elections the Liberals have picked up a fair amount of the non-political Tory vote during the course of campaigning. But part of their appeal was their amateurish inexperience. I fear the Alliance in general, and Roy Jenkins in particular, take themselves far too seriously to gather enough Tory protest votes. Labour, on the other hand, has not persuaded sufficient voters to take it seriously enough. An idle, heretical thought: were someone with the *gravitas* of Roy Jenkins to be leading the Labour Party, and someone with the idealism and decency of Michael Foot to be leading the Alliance, would not the prospects for both be a great deal brighter on 9 June? □

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ELECTION '83

Civil wrongs

Tony Gifford explores the Tories' policy on law and order and shows how far it has already gone towards systematically destroying civil liberties

BEFORE 1979 it would have been possible to argue that the outcome of an election would not have much effect on civil liberties. Successive Labour Home Secretaries had again and again caved in to the repressive demands of the institutions – police, prisons, immigration – which they were meant to control. The present Parliament, indeed, started with a spectacle to delight the political cynic: the Scottish Criminal Justice Bill, forerunner of the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill, being introduced by the new Tory government to Labour protests – the same Bill that Labour had introduced, in 1978, to Tory protests. Who was really in control of our basic civil rights?

Now, as in so many fields, the cosy consensus has been shattered. Partly by Mrs Thatcher's government, carrying towards logical extremes all the authoritarian desires of the Tory right wing. Partly by a welcome determination by Labour to listen to the voices of anger and despair at the bottom of the pile. A turning point came when the Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure reported its package of illiberal compromises. The response of the shadow Home Secretary, Roy Hattersley, was immediate. The proposals were 'deeply unsatisfactory . . . an erosion of the law of habeas corpus'. He has confirmed this position by his resolute opposition to the Police and Criminal Evidence Bill. In many other ways the proposals in Labour's manifesto on the police, legal services, prisons and immigration show how profoundly Labour has recognised the degradations to which people have been subjected, and resolved that they must be stopped.

But for Labour to be accepted as the natural defender of individual rights and freedoms, it must expose the Tories' concept of 'freedom under the law' for the sham which it is, and identify the forces which it represents. Mrs Thatcher did not initiate present-day authoritarianism. It has been growing in influence throughout the 1970s. The horror of Thatcherite Toryism is that it has embraced that movement and allowed it to become the official ideology of government. Chief Officers of Police, such vocal advocates in the 1970s of more power and authority, were by 1982 purring with delight. In a debate on law and order in March 1982, Eldon Griffiths MP, expressly reflecting the police view, praised Mr Whitelaw as 'the best friend of law enforcement we have had'. Tory right-wingers chimed their assent; only the death penalty,' corporal punishment and stiffer police powers were needed to complete their bliss. The stiffer powers were soon to follow. Will hanging and flogging be far behind?

A government committed to the promotion of gross inequality, using mass unemployment as an economic weapon, is bound to face bitter protest and disaffection. The propaganda of the authoritarian state then ignores the causes of the protest, and converts it into a law-and-order confrontation. More lethal arms and more sweeping powers are demanded by the security forces, and are readily granted to meet what is proclaimed to be a crisis on the streets. The new weapons cause still more hatred, and so the vicious spiral continues until any semblance of a common interest between rulers and ruled has disappeared.

WE HAVE SEEN this scenario in Northern Ireland over the last 15 years. The Tories have set it in train in the cities of Britain. The riots of 1981 were provoked by intolerable racism and abuse of power by the police. Their 'swamp' operations were carried out like military exercises against an enemy, with utter contempt for the community at which they were directed. The Tory response has been new weapons and new laws with never a word of regret for the original provocations.

The police needed little encouragement in the use of deadly weapons. After the coshes at Southall, one of which killed Blair Peach, and the gas canisters in Toxteth, fired as missiles directly at people, we now have the authorised anti-crowd weapon in our police stations: the plastic bullet gun, the weapon which has killed seven adults and seven children since it was introduced as a crowd control weapon in Northern Ireland, and blinded and injured many more. Policemen with such weapons in their hands become trigger-happy, all the more because they see that no one seems ever to be prosecuted for abusing them. The fault is less that of the young officer who fires in fright, than of the government which puts the weapon into his hands.

But subduing mass protest was not only a question of arms. Measures were being taken against the right of people to demonstrate at all. When the National Front proposed to march through the inner cities, the chance was taken to ban not just racist marches, but all marches, for periods of up to three months. Thirty-one such bans were imposed in 1981 alone. Picketing in solidarity with other workers was made illegal by the Employment Act 1980. The NCCL's leaflet for trade unionists made an apt comment: 'If this government's employment law was in force in Poland, there would only have been six pickets in the Gdansk shipyard.' The law was flouted with impunity during the health workers' strike; but over a less popular issue, where the authorities believe that they can get away with it, a Shrewsbury-style conspiracy prosecution will surely be launched.

The Tories will not stop there. Every facet of public-order law has been thrown open for debate, since the publication in 1980 of the Green Paper on the Public Order Act; and conclusions have yet to be reached. Among the government's suggestions: the banning of any demonstration unless five days' notice is given (a measure used to devastating effect in Derry in 1981, when all the known militants who had marched 'illegally' during the months of the hunger strikes were selected for prosecution, fines of £50 per march and stiff terms of prison in default); and the power for the police to ban stationary gatherings as well as marches, so that any mass picket or public rally would be under threat.

THE POLICE AND Criminal Evidence Bill had at least the merit of bringing so many repressive measures under one heading that, for the first time, public opinion began to protest on a broad front. When the Bill fell, few concessions of any substance had been made. Its main provisions are now well known: stop-and-search powers so broad as to give the police the perfect all-purpose weapon of harassment (thus nullifying the single positive reforming measure, the abolition of the 'sus' law); road block powers; summary arrest powers; powers to search the homes of innocent parties; powers to detain suspects for four days with no right of habeas corpus; and the ultimate for the sadistic policeman, the power to search 'body orifices'. All in all a fair picture of the sort of policing for which the Tories stand.

On the judicial front, the four years began with the shameful aftermath of Southall. For month after month we saw the railroading of the 345 men and women arrested through the Barnet Magistrates Court. The Court itself (over an hour's drive from Southall), the charges laid (never a chance to elect jury trial), and the magistrates (case-hardened stipendiaries) all combined to create a charade of justice. This pattern of conveyor-belt trials recurred in the 'riot courts' in Nottingham and other cities in 1981, and in the Oxford magistrates' treat-

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ment of the 286 claimants arrested in the 'Operation Major' round-up in 1982.

The scandal is not just that these things happened, but that no one in the government cared a jot. 'The interests of justice and judicial independence come first,' was Lord Hailsham's contemptuous response to the 30 lawyers who complained about the Barnet courts. Of course the victims of such injustice had already received their labels from the police and the media: 'blacks on the rampage'; 'teenage hooligans'; 'scroungers'. The authoritarian mentality, by treating people as less than human, can easily dismiss their claims to redress.

How safe is the jury? It remains one of the few effective checks on the power of the strong state. The acquittals by juries in the Bristol riot trial and the Bradford 12 case were victories which mightily angered the legal establishment. It remains very difficult, solely because of the jury, to lock away political activists for any length of time. So attempts to undermine the jury can be expected. Jury vetting was tightened up by new guidelines in 1980. People with even minor criminal records are to be excluded from jury service. Judges are calling for long trials to be heard by 'assessors'. The history of the Diplock courts in Northern Ireland should make us realise how quickly an authoritarian state can sweep away even the most sacred safeguards of a fair trial.

IT IS NOT SURPRISING that so many of the confrontations in the courts and on the streets have been the result of racism on the part of authority. Mrs Thatcher pointed the way in 1978, pandering to racist attitudes when she sympathised with people's fears that 'this country might be rather swamped by people with a different culture'. Her government acted swiftly to put racist ideas into law: first, by banning from the country the foreign husbands of women who, though settled here, were not born here and whose parents were not born here – a rule which finally had to be revoked under pressure of the European Court on Human Rights; and then by the introduction of the British Nationality Bill, taking away the basic security of citizenship which every person born in the UK had been able to enjoy, and, under the name of British Overseas Citizens, creating a class of inferior, stateless people.

One telling example of the Tory government's cowardice in the face of racism was the Home Secretary's refusal to make racialist conduct a police disciplinary offence. This was a Scarman recommendation which cried out to be adopted. The police's own research had confirmed the extent of racism in their ranks: in May 1982 Superintendent Butler of the Bramshill Police College had found that over half of the experienced officers who were surveyed agreed with extreme racist propositions such as 'all coloured people should return to their homeland and leave Britain for the British people'. Case after case, report after report, proves the prevalence of these attitudes on the street and in the police station. But nothing is done.

The Home Office under Whitelaw has become an ugly enough institution; what more awaits us if Tebbit were to succeed him? It covers up official misconduct, suppressing for example the report of the wanton destruction by the police of people's homes in Railton Road. It acts viciously against its critics, as witness its contempt action against Harriet Harman. It has presided over the growing dehumanisation of our prisons, to which it has no remedy except to build more prisons.

The Home Office and its agencies are the sharp ends of an all-pervading ideology. The Tories' attack on civil liberties aims at all who do not fit well into the free market economy: trade unionists, unemployed people, and – since the free market needs free labour to look after the country's children – women. Maternity rights have been reduced, and abolished altogether in small firms where the abuses are greatest. Equal pay remains a dream, with the government refusing to conform to basic European standards of equal pay for work of equal value. And the Family Policy Group, under Thatcher's personal direction, would have worse in store with 'financial incentives' and other measures to 'encourage' married women to stay at home.

In their 1979 manifesto, the Tories claimed that 'the most disturbing threat to our freedom and security is the growing disrespect for the rule of law'. The reality is that it is the law enforcers who have failed to respect the law. It is Tory government which has threatened the freedom and security of our people. □

Tony Gifford is a barrister and chairman of the Legal Action Group.

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ELECTION '83

Street of shame

Mary Holland on the election press

SOMETHING VERY ODD is going on out there. The consensus among the leader writers and London-based commentators is that Michael Foot is an unmitigated disaster. Yet the impression one gets from a closer reading of those reporters who have been following him around is that the Labour Party leader has been blazing a trail through Britain like some latter day Wesley.

The *Observer* last Sunday carried two reports on Mr Foot's progress. The front page (in my early edition) remarked on a crowd of 1,500 who turned out to pack a meeting in Norwich, even though the Cup Final was on television at the same time. Although this story disappeared from the later editions, Robert Taylor's report inside the paper remained. 'Last week the old crusader warmed the hearts of party faithfuls from Glasgow to Ipswich, packing the halls at his evening meetings, bringing audiences to their feet with a fiery evangelical parade (sic).'

The *Sunday Times* report was much the same in tone, yet its editorial considered the prospect of Mr Foot ever becoming Prime Minister and concluded: 'Even Labour's friends must surely pray that it does not happen.'

The rift between reporting and comment has been such that some journalists have felt impelled to explain the discrepancy between Mr Foot's popularity on the stump and his dismal ratings in the opinion polls. Edward Steen in the *Sunday Telegraph* claimed to have uncovered a Fleet Street conspiracy to be nice to Mr Foot. He should read Peregrine Worsthorne in his own paper ('an elderly ranting pamphleteer waving a stick on Hampstead Heath'), John Smith in the *Sunday People* ('like an over sixties Saga holiday-maker on a cut price package tour') or any number of others. Jon Akass, in a piece of typically decent reporting which makes one wonder, once again, what he is doing writing for the *Sun*, thinks that Michael Foot's style has gone out of fashion.

THE FACT that fashion is dictated, to some extent at least, by the way Fleet Street portrays the Labour Party leader is a question to which Mr Akass does not address himself. As the *Sunday Mirror* remarked: 'If Maggie had such a genuine display of public affection, the pictures would be on the front page of every servile sheet.'

The same goes for the opinion polls since those who answer them are presumably affected by what they read in the papers. More than any other factor the surfeit of polls has stultified reporting of this campaign and of the issues. My own bet is that Fleet Street will live to regret this craven dependence on the pollsters. What is there left for journalists to do if all that matters is the variation in the percentage of 'don't knows' from day to day.

Perversely, there are signs that even the Conservatives are getting worried that the kind of personal savaging being meted out to Michael Foot could prove counterproductive. Hence the decision, reported in the *Daily Express*, not to go ahead with a particularly offensive advertisement suggested by Saatchi and Saatchi, the advertising agents before whom even the Advertising Standards Authority bows its head in shame. This showed a doddering Michael Foot on Hampstead Heath and carried the slogan 'As a pensioner he is better off under the Tories', or would have done if 'top Tories' hadn't decided against it.

There's also the danger that journalists themselves may revolt against peddling the party line. How else to explain the photographer who handed Mrs Foot his instructions which read 'Express only wants pix if Foot falls over, or collapses or is shot etc'? Or the members of the NUJ chapel at the *Daily Mail* who last Monday, after a routine discussion of their pay claim, passed overwhelmingly a motion protesting at the biased nature of the paper's election cover age. This row is still bubbling along, despite Sir David's dismissal of the journalists' case. At their meeting on Monday the chapel also agreed to reconvene before 1 June to consider the *Mail* management's response to their protest.

As important, the Tory bias in the popular media can provoke your opponents to start responding in the same vein. The *Mirror*, which started off noticeably half-hearted in its support for Labour, is now back in cracking form, laying into all the sacred cows of the campaign, from the opinion polls to Saatchi and Saatchi. Possibly the best piece of polemical writing so far has been Keith Waterhouse's enraged response to S & S's double-page spread: 'Putting a Cross in the Tory Box means . . .' ▷

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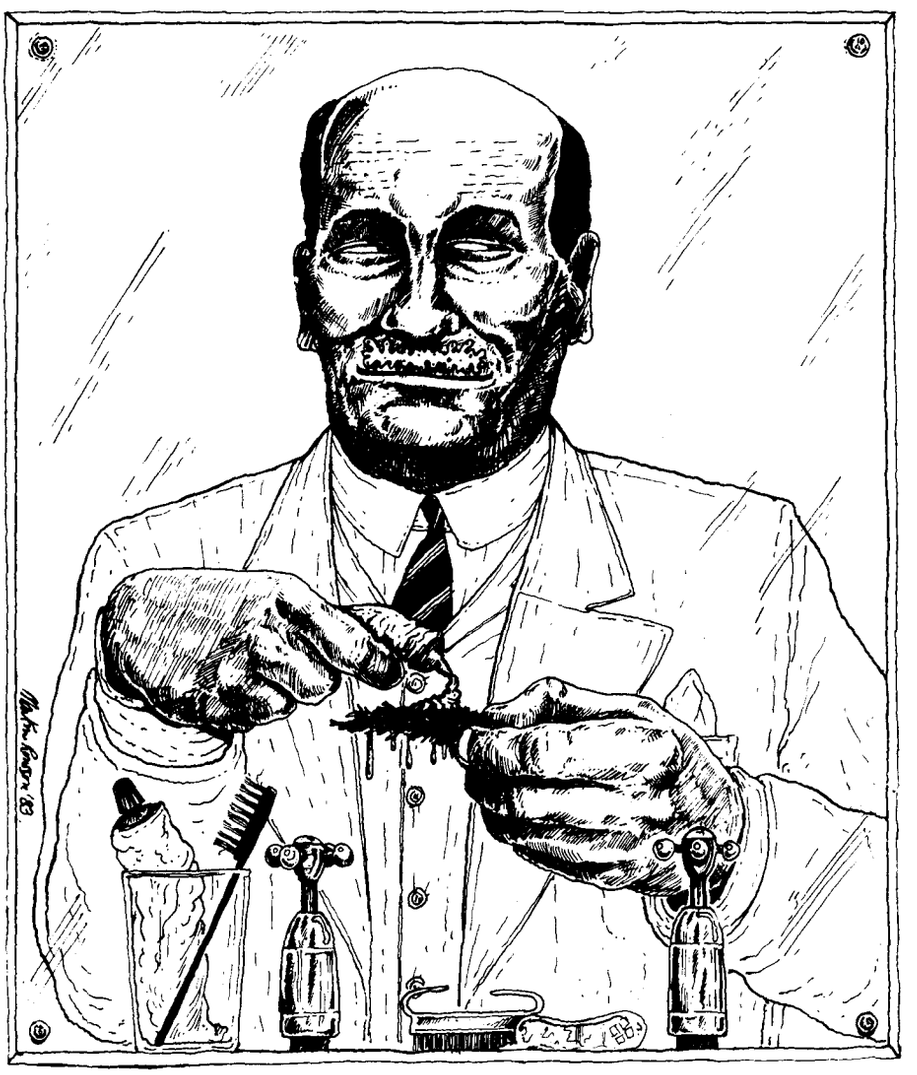

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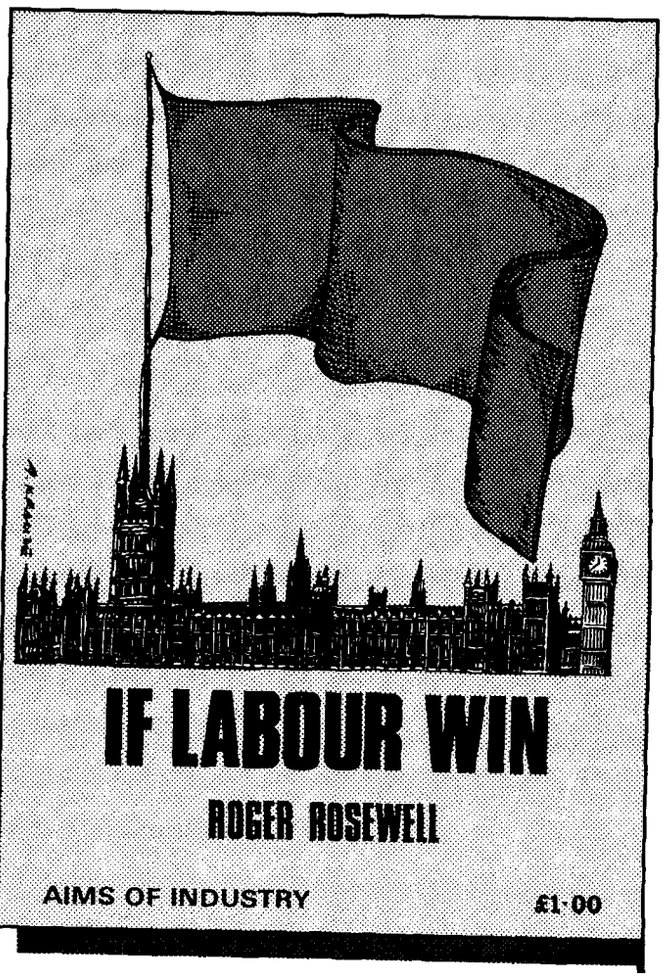

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For all these reasons there are signs that what the *Mirror* calls 'the servile prints' are switching from savaging Michael Foot to the even more agreeable task of glorifying Mrs Thatcher. In the space of four days the *Daily Express* has carried two interviews with her, the second by Jean Rook ('Up, Up and Away with Wonderwoman') who has been notable even by Fleet Street standards in her adulation of the Conservative leader. On Sunday, the *Mail* carried an interview with her by its political editor, while the *Sunday Express*, not to be outdone, reproduced an editorial from *Le Figaro*, which described Mrs Thatcher as 'the Western World's Mother Courage'. The *Sun* set about the task of demolishing her enemies within her own party. Messrs Prior and Pym were urged to rally round someone 'who now dominates our public life as no politician has done since Churchill'.

Other papers are already speculating on the future shape of Mrs Thatcher's next cabinet once the 'wets' have been purged. Messrs Tebbit and Howe are now being built up as the men of the future. Thus the *Daily Mail* informs us that they know more about unemployment at first hand than 'well heeled socialists' like Tony Benn.

Unemployment is the one issue that continues to worry loyalists in the press. The other is defence. In this *The Times*, as one would expect, leads the field. On the same day as it ran an editorial advocating conscription, the paper also produced Mrs Thatcher's most prestigious new supporter. While the Tory party was never actually mentioned in the course of a long interview with Bernard Levin, Alexander Solzhenitsyn left us in no doubt where he stood: 'Any socialism, even the softest form, the most "democratic" form . . . will inevitably come to communism.' If he's ever short of a few bob he should get in touch with Saatchi and Saatchi. □

ELECTION '83

Factories for sale

John Hatton reports on the progress of the campaign in Yorkshire

EXCEPT for South Wales, there is no area of Britain like South Yorkshire for turning out the Labour vote. With Labour majorities of 20,000-plus common in the coalmining and steelworking seats, it is one of the few places where you still hear the old cliché about weighing the Labour vote rather than counting it.

Humberside and South Yorkshire are possibly the worst sufferers from four years of Mrs Thatcher. The administrative area of Yorkshire and Humberside has an overall unemployment rate of 14.6 per cent, and some of the local figures are even more striking: 20.4 per cent unemployment in Rotherham, 19.7 per cent in Scunthorpe, 16.4 per cent in Hull, 15.2 per cent in Barnsley, 14.8 per cent in Grimsby and 14.6 per cent in Sheffield. The link road from the M1 motorway to Sheffield and Rotherham is a blitzed area where steelworks used to stand. Many of the remaining BSC mills have had 'For Sale' boards up these last three years.

Where it is not the decline of the steel industry, it is the decline of coal that characterises South Yorkshire. The west of the coalfield is worked out or has limited life left, with the Coal Board concentrating its efforts on the Selby field and the reopening of recently closed mines at Thorne and Monkton which have capitally intensive low manning.

In Humberside, it is the combination of the collapse of the steel industry and the decline of deep sea fishing which hangs over the election. On the River Humber just above Hull is a trawlers' graveyard of hundreds of fishing boats which are now surplus to requirements. Some, costing in excess of £500,000, made only one or two trips before being caught in the recession.

In Scunthorpe, the town's landscape is dominated by the corpse of the Normanby Park steelworks, which once employed 8,000 people. It closed in 1981. Also near to Scunthorpe is the site of the Nypro chemical works. The first factory on the site blew up in 1973 with the loss of 28 lives. By 1979 it had been rebuilt at a cost of £30 million. It was reopened by Mrs Thatcher, who congratulated the company on its initiative in rebuilding it. 'This is what the future of British industry is about,' she declared.

She was right. Two years later the factory had closed down, a victim of the slump in artificial fibres and the general recession. It never even went into full production. The site has now been taken over by Glanford borough council, which intends to turn it into a trading estate. In fact, Humberside and South Yorkshire are pockmarked with trading estates containing empty new factories, which for some reason are thought to be the answer to the empty old ones.

Meanwhile, the local Labour and Tory parties are engaged in an increasingly hysterical battle about which of them can claim credit in the unlikely event of the port of Immingham becoming a European base for the Japanese car company Nissan. Both parties claim the project as South Humberside's salvation and say that if Nissan built the factory it could create up to 5,000 jobs. However, Humberside is just one of five possible locations in the UK for Nissan, who unfortunately give every indication of not being inclined to move to Britain at all.

THE STORY of unemployment, closed factories, declining industries and the rest would be a tale of almost total gloom were it not for the Scunthorpe Conservative Association, whose choice of candidate reminds us that there are still two nations. Sue Hickmet, wife of the Tory candidate for Glanford and Scunthorpe, was asked by the local paper about her husband's intentions if he won the seat. She replied that between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. he would continue to be a barrister practising in the London law courts – 'because an MP's salary is not that large,' she explained. This would bring Richard Hickmet's total number of jobs to three, since the energetic fellow is already supplementing his legal earnings by acting as company secretary for the family firm, Hickmet Hotels.

South Humberside is not one of the most militant places in the world, but Mr Hickmet may be too hopeful if he really believes that the local unemployed have accepted their station in life as part of Maggie's dole queue. 'They know perfectly well why jobs were cut in the steel industry,' he said.

Mr Hickmet will not be the Member of Parliament for Glanford and Scunthorpe after the election. For although Scunthorpe threw up an extremely strange result last time, with the election of Conservative Michael Brown by 486 votes in a seat which had been Labour for over 40 years, extensive redistribution should have turned it into a safe seat for John Ellis, a Bristol MP between 1966 and 1970 who only realised that he had turned down promotion in Wilson's government when he read the Crossman diaries.

Michael Brown himself has moved over the border into Brigg and Cleethorpes, which takes in a large part of the former Louth constituency, where the Liberals came second in 1979 and are hoping to go one better this time. Brown was selected for the seat in preference to the Tory MP for Louth, Michael Brotherton, who did not help his chances by being convicted of drunken driving and by hitching lifts in the police cars of three counties to attend a party organised by his wife. □

THIS ENGLAND

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□ Dr John Rae, the headmaster of Westminster School, jumped to the defence of his wife, Daphne, yesterday after she had been attacked for disclosing incidents of bullying, homosexuality and sex at public schools. 'All I can say to her critics is: Don't point your guns at Daphne, point them instead at Neil Kinnock (Labour education spokesman) who wants to kill off all public schools', he declared. – *Daily Telegraph* (G. Moor)

□ The Independent Broadcasting Authority has banned a public service announcement on contraception because it believes young people could be influenced into thinking that pre-marital sex is normal and commonplace. – *Guardian* (Janet Mearns)

□ The plan, the fourth regional plan to be leaked, says that although it is impossible to predict the scale of a nuclear attack, 'It is confidently predicted that there will be survivors.' – *Guardian* (C. Ligota)

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DIARY

Paul Foot

'Sometimes I've heard it said that Conservatives have been associated with unemployment. That's absolutely wrong. We'd have been drummed out of office if we'd had this level of unemployment.' I keep repeating to myself this famous quote of Margaret Thatcher on television on 4 May 1977 (when there were 1,269,000 out of work) to try to keep my spirits up against the polls and the weather. But I fear it was wrong then, and wrong now. Mass unemployment does *not* lead automatically to the Left. It saps people's confidence. They yearn for change, but are frightened by it. There's as much bitterness and hatred of the Tories now as ever before, but very little of the fighting spirit which toppled Heath in 1974. Under Heath, the rise in unemployment was matched by a great burst of industrial militancy. Under Thatcher, two million more people have walked onto the dole without a struggle. There were just the faintest signs – from places like Cowley and Rotherham and Tilbury – that all this was changing. Then Thatcher called the election. This might not be entirely a coincidence. She may indeed be worried that her 'recovery' will not materialise – but far more worried, I imagine, that it will be accompanied by a recovery of trade union resistance.

○

A sign of the times is the cult of Yosser Hughes. You can't see a Labour crowd nowadays without the slogan 'Gissa Job'. Alan Bleasdale's *Boys from the Black Stuff* was a brilliant and gruelling picture of the unemployment tragedy, the best thing that's been on the telly for many a long year. But it was spoiled for me by its relentless pessimism. Each episode ended in a convulsion of hopelessness.

The death of the old socialist in the last programme seemed to symbolise the death of all socialist aspirations and ideas. So the plaintive, passive, obsequious 'Gissa Job' replaces the more traditional, powerful slogans like 'Fight for the Right to Work', or even 'Take it Easy, But Take It'. I noticed that, when Alan Bleasdale went to the Grosvenor Hotel to get his award for *Boys from the Black Stuff*, he crossed a picket line of striking waiters who had been sacked by Trusthouse Forte after daring to ask for a contract of employment. Perhaps he was so surprised to see workers doing something to change their circumstances that he could not even muster an elementary gesture of solidarity.

○

A rather belated bid to put a stop to all the apathy was made in the first week of elections by Sam McCluskie, a senior official of the seamen's union. Mr McCluskie dared to suggest that, if unemployment got much worse, the unions might have to 'defend their members', perhaps even go on strike. The media pounced. The *Daily Express* shouted: 'It's 1926 All Over Again.' Poor Sam was rocked right back on his heels. When did he think the strike might come, he was asked by a million hacks. Oh, he guessed, not until unemployment got to, say, six million. He could leave it a bit longer than that – say to thirteen million. Then there wouldn't be any workers left to go on strike. Mr McCluskie, by the way, was a 1982 finalist in the TUC's International Brotherhood of the Year Award – for his remark at the seamen's union conference last year that he would not 'shed a single tear' for the 360 Argentine sailors who died on the *General Belgrano*.

○

Talking of the Falklands, the best thing in the papers this week was Simon Winchester's report in the *Sunday Times* of his flight there from Ascension Island on board an RAF Transport plane. He vividly described the dangers, boredom and waste involved in keeping the garrison at Port Stanley equipped with such vital necessities as electric fans for officers. He thinks it might all be more 'forgivable' if the Falklands become a 'strategic allied base'. I remember, just after the war last year, going to the Latin American Bureau and hearing Martin Honeywell speak on the future of the Falklands. He showed how the build-up of troops would have to continue indefinitely as the Argentines built up their forces. The fragile civilian economy would collapse under the pressure and the islanders would gradually be driven out. What a perfect climax to Mrs Thatcher's War for Freedom if all the free people leave and the barren islands are barricaded forever against a hostile mainland at a minimum cost to the British people of £500m a year (current prices).

○

I can reveal some treats in store for *Sun* readers. Two series are under way. One is called 'Black and Blue' – it features black people who plan to vote Tory. Another is called 'The Dole Queue Tories', in which unemployed men and women will explain how much Mrs Thatcher means to them. Both series have taken rather longer than expected because black and unemployed people have been infuriatingly reluctant to respond. I hear that the *Sun*'s editor, South London graduate Kelvin Mackenzie, was most interested in an idea for a third blockbuster about gay Tory voters. It was only when a minion drew up a tasteful *Sun* heading – FAGS FOR MAGS – that Kelvin got the uneasy feeling that he was being teased. This sort of thing must stop or Kelvin really will go over the top.

○

I wonder what the people of Mousehole and the surrounding Cornish villages thought about Tuesday's pictures of Thatcher gaily electioneering on a lifeboat. One clear conclusion from the recent inquiry into the Penlee lifeboat disaster was that speedier action by the coastguard would have saved the lifeboat, and the ship it went to help. Less clear was the effect of cuts in the coastguard service, which is now more widely spread out on the coast than it used to be. In 1980, Thatcher's government refused to expand the coastguard service as it had been recommended to do by a Department of Trade inquiry. Now Thatcher's top hatchet-man from Marks & Spencer, Sir Derek Rayner, has come up with plans for more cuts in the coastguard service, which will disperse it still further, and make it still more dependent on machines rather than on local knowledge of seas and winds. Next time a lifeboat goes down because a harassed coastguard plays it by the book, perhaps they should play Mrs Thatcher's election tribute to lifeboatmen at the funeral.

ROGER WODDIS

No earthly use

Dr David Owen, speaking for the Liberal/SDP Alliance, has rejected no first use of nuclear weapons in favour of 'No early use'.

My practice, when I cure the sick,
Is not to kill them right away:
Rejecting calls to make it quick,
I recommend a slight delay.

I try to ease their last goodbye
By keeping them on tenterhooks,
Which gives them time, before they die,
To talk about my dark good looks.

In treating patients for a cough,
It doesn't do to peak too soon:
The ideal time to write them off
Would be tomorrow afternoon.

But I still worry, truth to tell,
Lest they should use their final breath
To murmur, as they say farewell,
'I do not love you, Dr Death.'

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FOREIGN NEWS: PUERTO RICO

Women too soon

Anita Bennett reports on a disturbing hormonal development in children, investigated by Broadside, the women's TV company

'MY CARMEN IS SIX years old, is fully developed and looks 13. She acts like a teenager. "Mummy, I'm in love," she says, and I try to act like this is normal. But I know it's not.'

Young Carmen's doctor is Carmen Saenz, a leading paediatric endocrinologist in Puerto Rico's Diego Hospital. Over the last ten years, she has had more than 3,000 cases of premature thellarche – the growth of breast tissue and onset of menstruation. She's seen babies as young as six months developing breasts, and children under seven growing ovarian cysts which have to be surgically removed. Girls as young as four have begun to menstruate. Although the victims of this syndrome are mainly girls, some boys have been affected too.

Dr Saenz believes, with considerable evidence, that this premature thellarche is brought on by oestrogen contamination in locally produced chicken and milk. When children are taken off these foods, she says, the symptoms, in most cases, disappear. Contamination has been proved both in tests that she paid for herself last summer and in one of the tests carried out by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Further tests were, they say, inconclusive.

No other acceptable solution for the changes in the children has been offered by any authority. Yet not only has no action been taken to prevent farmers obtaining the banned Diethylstil bestrol (DES) to inject into their animals, but Dr Saenz has been verbally abused, threatened by local producers and forced to move into a secure tower block after her country house was shot into. Since our visit, the government ordered a surprise Medicare group on her private hospital – while she was away in the States. The hospital is now facing considerable harassment.

There are two particularly intractable obstacles in Dr Saenz's way. The first is that chicken is the staple food of Puerto Ricans and a key industry of the island. The second is Puerto Rico's ambivalent relationship with the USA as a 'free associated state'. Puerto Rican women were the only ones to have the birth control pill tested on them before it was put on the market. (167 women were tested; three died; the pill was put on sale. The results were not revealed until the pill was in widespread use.) Then Puerto Rican men who worked in the pill factories, handling oestrogen, began to grow breasts. Some had radical mastectomies, some became impotent, one is now dying of cancer. 'There are no birth control pill factories in the US,' points out the men's lawyer, David Rive.

RISING STANDARDS of living, however, have made the American connection seem attractive. Socialists and supporters of Puerto Rican independence are more isolated than they were, and no opposition politician has taken up the issue of the children affected by oestrogen (DES) – which, it is suspected, is injected into local chickens to make them attractive enough to compete with American imports. Although this is against the law, David Rive says that the practice 'is common knowledge though it's hard to prove. But people are afraid. The doctors aren't telling the patients the real reasons. The mothers are not telling the daughters. The doctors aren't willing to testify.'

A private detective assisting our women's TV company, Broadside, easily bought DES over the counter this April. In frustration, Dr Saenz 'went public' with her analysis of the children's problem last summer. She had first written to the Minister of Health in 1975, and the number of cases that she was seeing went down. After the appointment in 1978 of a new Secretary for Health, Dr Jaime Rivera Dueno, the cases began increasing again. Dr Saenz wrote to him early in 1982. He did not acknowledge her letter. Dr Saenz then told the press.

It was a major front-page story and local papers began demanding investigations, suggesting not only the contamination of chicken and milk, but other environmental pollution. Chicken sales dropped by 40 per cent and the chicken producers threatened legal action against Dr Saenz. Now the story has faded again. Ricky Gimbernard, father of one of the affected children, regards it as a cover-up, a protection for the local industry, for the Secretary of Health – and for Puerto Rico's future. 'The kids need to be number one. Instead they spend all the money to build new highways.'

The US government had been leaving the problem to the Puerto Rican government. Then, last year, it discovered that, out of several hundred Haitian refugee men held on Puerto Rico under federal protection at a US army base, 77 suddenly grew breasts. The US government claimed that this phenomenon was due to a previous poor diet – but could not explain why seven (local) male guards had grown breasts too. All the men had eaten the same chicken supply.

The US government is now as embarrassed by the problem as the Puerto Rican authorities – and as reluctant to admit that it can do anything about it. Nine Haitians have filed suit against it for $9 million damages.

More than a year ago, Dr Jose Cordero of the Centre for Disease Control in Atlanta,

This child is eight years old – but, 'Why are you bothering with this thing?' asked a US doctor

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Georgia, had, says another doctor, Dr Perez-Comas, admitted privately to him that the Puerto Rican authorities should be examining the diet of their people. Then, in a complete volte-face, Cordero declared that premature sexuality was a genetic problem of the Puerto Rican people. Why, asks Perez-Comas, has the syndrome therefore not afflicted the one million Puerto Ricans living in New York?

Questions about the thellarche put to Dr Lyn Campbell of the Federal Drug Administration, who was not expecting any problems with our TV company, seemed to cause him considerable distress. 'Why are you bothering with this thing?' he demanded. 'There are many more serious problems, like cancer for example.' (In fact, there is a well established link between DES and cancer.) The day after our eight-minute filmed interview, Dr Cordero was flown to the island for secret consultations.

At the moment, the Puerto Rican government appears to be determined to continue to support the local chicken industry – which means accepting its contaminated chicken. Testing on chicken samples has stopped altogether. This April, Beatriz Ruiz de la Mata, a local reporter, revealed that the Department of Education had bought 1½ million pounds of chicken frozen at the height of the oestrogen scare. It cost them 80 cents per lb, compared to 60 cents for US chicken. A local chicken farmer whom we interviewed confirmed the government intervention: 'Oh, that oestrogen business, that was no problem. The government bought all my chicken. It was used in the prisons and the schools.' □

Broadcast's Different from Other Girls *will be transmitted on C4 at 8.30pm on 1 June.*

CHINA

War clouds

As Peking and Hanoi rattle sabres, Jonathan Mirsky reports

WITH GREAT FANFARE and before dozens of international newspapermen, Vietnam this month pulled 10,000 soldiers out of Kampuchea. Peking sneered – it was merely another disguised rotation of military units, it charged.

Whatever happened in Phom Penh, it has not muted China's threats to 'teach Vietnam a second lesson'. But memories of the last 'defensive invasion' (in February 1979) which cost thousands of Chinese lives, may persuade Peking to keep its sword sheathed.

During the last weeks, while Chinese and Vietnamese frontier guards have been killing each other in small numbers along the 720-mile border, Peking has allowed Hanoi to see a glint of steel. Fresh from his talks with Chinese strongman Deng Xiaoping, Kampuchea's Prince Norodom Sihanouk repeated Deng's warning that China was prepared to teach Vietnam a second lesson for lingering in Kampuchea and for overwhelming strongholds belonging to the Prince and to Peking's other, tougher allies: the Khmer Rouge of Pol Pot.

Deng was also cautioning Moscow not to imagine that China's hopes for detente blind it to the increasing influence of the Soviet Union in South-East Asia. Two week's ago, Party Leader Hu Yao Bang followed Deng by warning Moscow that, because of Indochina, 'the possibility of a direct Sino-Soviet conflict cannot be excluded'. Deng's threats should be taken seriously. The last time he forecast an educational war was during his visit to Washington in early 1979, a few weeks before the Chinese People's Liberation Army crashed across the Vietnamese border. It was China's revenge for Vietnam's occupation of Kampuchea in 1978, the ousting of Pol Pot and the installation in Pnom Penh of a complient regime. More profoundly, in Peking's eyes, Vietnam was serving as a hitman for Russian expansionism, or 'hegemonism', on China's southern flank.

During their less than three weeks in Vietnam, China's forces got within a short tank-thrust from Hanoi. Then they withdrew, leaving behind wrecked towns and farms. But the pedagogic war provided Peking only meagre satisfaction. After 17 days of fighting, Chinese casualties amounted to almost half those sustained by the Americans in ten years. The general staff, reshuffled and openly criticised by Deng, became the butt of poems questioning their strategy and their courage.

Three serving Chinese soldiers, veterans of the war, told me that their company had been mauled clambering up fog-shrouded Vietnamese mountains for which they had only Manchu dynasty maps. Hanoi's forces, better equipped than their adversaries (with Russian and captured American weapons) and far more battle-hardened, had punished the intruders so badly that civilian hospitals in Kaifeng, over 1,000 miles from the fighting, overflowed with wounded.

Now, four years later, some of the conditions for the first invasion still exist. Vietnam continues to overpower China's Kampuchean clients. Peking's fears of Russian imperialism have been sharpened by the installation of Soviet naval and air bases in Indochina. But, before Deng propels his generals once more into Vietnam, he will consider how the situation has changed since the first, confident days in February 1979. He will recall the invaders' losses. The People's Liberation Army is said to be more compact nowadays, but the Vietnamese are more seasoned than ever. Only 15 per cent of Hanoi's army, roughly 160,000 men, are stationed in Kampuchea. 600,000 others, more than in 1979, defend their border with China. As for diplomatic pressure on the Russians, Deng's envoys to the Moscow negotiations were told that all questions about Vietnam, 'a third party', must be

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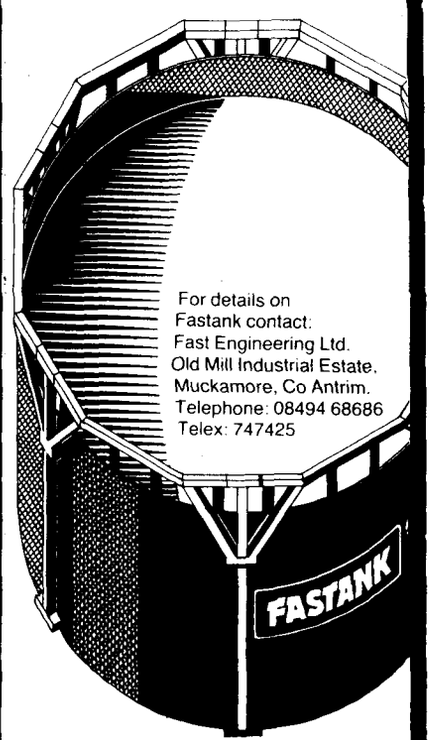

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addressed to Hanoi.

Hanoi, despite its £1 million a day allowance from Moscow, is not a Soviet running dog. Its forces are in Kampuchea for its own reasons: to forestall further Pol Pot incursions into Vietnamese territory and to bind more tightly an Indochinese confederation, with Vietnam at its head. Deng knows, of course, that after 2,000 years of Chinese occupation and intervention, Vietnam will be a tough bargainer – even with Moscow. If their Soviet bankers murmur that the Vietnamese might compromise a bit, Hanoi will remind them that the Russians now have access to Vietnamese and Kampuchean bases, and that they can recoup their investment by extracting Vietnamese oil.

A further restraint on Peking's inclination to invade will be the change in China's international position. China and the US now get on badly – while China and Russia are alienated by the issue of Vietnam. If Peking wants to get on better with Moscow it will have to remove Kampuchea as the primary Chinese precondition for normalisation, and admit to itself that the authorities in Hanoi, unlike those in Kabul, are not Russian puppets. Deng's negotiators should consider Moscow's offer of last October, that China and Russia pull back several hundred thousand troops along their 4,000 mile common border. Peking's commanders would welcome the space to hammer some of their more advanced units into a modern force.

Such considerations, together with the recognition that wars are very expensive these days, especially for poor countries with plenty of internal problems screaming for money, may induce Deng and his colleagues to settle down for a diplomatic slog with Hanoi. The alternative is the bloody certainty of renewed combat in Vietnam's northern mountains. □

UNITED STATES

French polish

Claudia Wright on US coolness to socialist France and Greece

Washington

IN THE HALLWAY of George Washington's house at Mount Vernon there is one of the original keys to the gate of the Paris Bastille – a gift to Washington from the Marquis de Lafayette. As a symbol of the alliance between French and American nationalism, the key is an anachronism, long overtaken by the divergence of the two states' fortunes in the Great Power game.

These days, US officials prefer the ambiance of the French ambassador's residence. There, in a salon decorated with panels taken from the Versailles apartment of Madame de Pompadour, visiting Socialist ministers and notables of the Mitterrand Administration try their amiable best to placate the Reaganites' sensibilities – while members of the American press fall swiftly under the spell of whomever the Elysée Palace despatches to Washington as envoy. The current one, Bernard Vernier-Palliez, former boss of Renault, was recently described by the *New York Times* as having a smile that 'is addictive, like French clotted cream over fresh raspberries'. With such widely held sentiments, the Reaganites can be said to belong to the Francophile party in Washington – the faction, that is, that likes to go to French parties in haute couture.

But French Socialism is another matter – as is that other spectre of European socialism haunting the Administration: the pan-Hellenic socialist movement (PASOK) of Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou. US officials display an unparalleled degree of animosity towards these two socialist governments, ostensibly because they are socialist, because Mitterrand has criticised US economic policies and because Papandreou is reluctant, without a decent *quid pro quo*, to sign an agreement for US-NATO use of bases on Greek territory.

And yet – foggily though this is understood in Washington – French and Greek foreign policy is hardly unique in Western Europe. British and German steel exports have threatened the US market as much as, or more than those of the French. Nonetheless, as an aide to French minister Jean-Pierre Chevenement observed (after a fruitless bargaining session last year at the department of commerce), 'To the Americans, socialist steel is bad steel.'

French nuclear strategy is closer to Reagan doctrine than it is to much conventional thinking in the rest of Europe. The French military has deliberately courted the US with gestures of reintegration in NATO planning. The French bishops even backed the Reagan Administration's nuclear strategy against their fellow bishops in America – gestures that have neither been publicly acknowledged, nor reciprocated.

Germany under Chancellor Kohl, Italy and Britain have been just as hostile as the French to US policy on the Siberian gas pipeline – and equally reluctant to go to economic war with Moscow – yet have not attracted the same US retaliation. The French, say US customs officials, don't steal American high technology computers, electronics and weapons systems any more flagrantly than the Germans, British or Japanese. They are about as cooperative as the others in blocking conspiracies to divert the technology to the Russians. Plainly, the Mitterrand administration holds the current world record for evicting KGB agents – it is also the only government to lose the life of an agent in the US hunt to expose the conspiracy to kill the Pope.

EVEN IN THE Administration's Central American war, about which Paris appeared, for a time, to be less than enthusiastic, the Elysée has endeavoured to make good by sending Régis Debray, once Che Guevara's comrade-in-arms and now an advisor to the President, to perform a personal apostasy for US officials – autographing his latest book for ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick and assuring all who would listen that the Soviet Union is the real menace, not only to Europe, but the American hemisphere.

What more could the Gaullists have offered that the Socialists have not presented to Washington? Why, then, has US policy continued, through the Paris embassy, to work at destabilising French credit and provoking further runs on the franc? Why has the Administration continued to prod the British and Germans into isolating the French at European Community negotiations, setting them up as too intransigent to make concessions to US policy?

In the case of the Greek socialists, the negotiations for a military base agreement have produced far more US arm-twisting than the equally contentious, longer-running talks with Portugal over the air base at Lajes. US tactics have included manipulation of Turkish military threats; withholding bilateral security guarantees; a freeze on US military assistance; and a campaign of press innuendo suggesting that the Greek government is sidling close enough to Moscow to provoke an internal coup d'état. If it were Greek *socialism* that genuinely troubled the White House, why would the Spanish and Scandinavian varieties have been treated with benign neglect?

The answer is not as ideological as might be thought. The essence of the problem is the personal difficulty between Reagan, Mitterrand and Papandreou. This is the same problem that Lord Carrington had with Secretary of State Haig, Chancellor Schmidt with President Carter. The trouble is that Mitterrand and Papandreou appear to Washington to lack respect for Reagan's grip on the affairs of state. They seem too cocksure of their own intellectual ability and too willing to prove it at the expense of the US President. There is nothing the President detests more than being upstaged – and nothing enrages White House aides more than being made to feel out of their depth.

The Administration is as badly informed about European politics as the US generals who stormed ashore in Morocco in November 1942 to reconstruct the French forces against Hitler. In this reprise of that error-littered history, Mitterrand is playing de Gaulle, while Reagan is a cross between Generals Patton, Clark and Eisenhower, alternately charmed and bamboozled by French courtliness and bluff.

The Greeks are better protected than the French by the effective Greek-American representation in Congress. The Administration miscalculated this strength in the Senate and House Foreign Relations Committees this year – its enthusiasm for Turkey has been rebuffed in several votes.

The political philosopher Spike Milligan once suggested that the Americans were becoming the 'New Germans'. As the parley begins at the Royal Governor's palace at Williamsburg, the 'New Germans' would like nothing so much from the Euro-Socialists than that they consent to becoming the 'New Vichy'. □

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VICTORIAN VALUES

Historians take issue with
MRS THATCHER

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Raphael Samuel

Soft focus nostalgia

MRS THATCHER uses 'Victorian values' to point to something missing in our lives, an absence which people's feelings of resentment or pride can fill at will. For Mrs Winterton, the Conservative candidate for Congleton, Victorian values are 'thrift, kindness and family values'; for Mr Boyson, Minister responsible for schools, they are something altogether more repressive: 'Parents did not want their children to be taught deviant practices by proselytising homosexuals' he told the Ruislip Conservatives; 'Good old-fashioned order, even Victorian order is far superior to illiterate disorder and innumerate chaos in the classroom.'

The appeal to Victorian values may also enjoy an aesthetic support, in particular the chorus of conservationist outrage which has been rising since the 1960s as an antiphony to comprehensive urban development and modernisation. In the wake of the Beeching axe (1958), it took on the character of a mass enthusiasm leading to the restoration to make-believe life of hundreds of miles of track. Steam-powered machinery, painstakingly reassembled in the new museums of industrial archaeology, has dignified the factory system as part of the national heritage. Victorian slums have been rehabilitated as desirable cottages – an emblem, in an age of tower blocks, of building to a human scale. In another, more sentimental vein, CAMRA rediscovered the glories of the Victorian pub, while the antique boom has, perhaps, encouraged a revaluation of what Mrs Thatcher calls 'old fashioned' family life. Mangles, from symbols of toil, have been turned into *objets d'art;* stuffed squirrels and decorative firescreens serve newly prosperous middle class couples as surrogates for family heirlooms.

MAGGIE REGINA

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Mrs Thatcher's notions of Victorian values may also have drawn subliminally on an evocative social history, widely current in recent years, which has offered us a more 'human' version of the past and which, like the museums, has imbued that past with aesthetic qualities it lacked at the time. Above all, period photographs – shown on television, in Sunday colour supplements, sold as picture postcards – have offered us unforgettable images of 19th century life in which all is patience and poise. Instead of the little 'piecers' panting after the spinning mules or children labouring down mines – those lithographs taken from the 1840s factory commissions which have long been the standard illustrations in school text books – we are now faced with row upon row of aproned artisans, assembled for the works photograph, staring out at us in frozen dignity. Needlewomen in sweat shops no longer conjure up images of hunger and fatigue when we see them in statuesque pose.

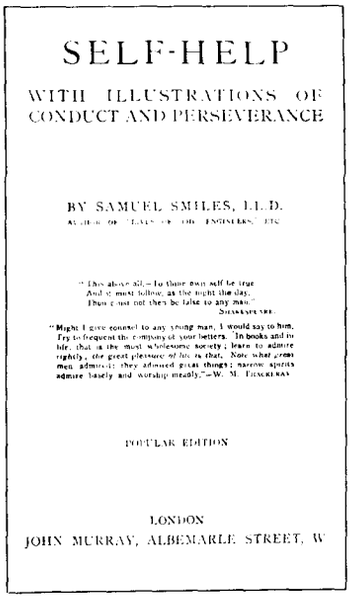
In one recent coffee-table book, a caption to a working class family portrait of 1861 runs: 'Despite the meagreness of their clothes, all bespeaks virtuous and hard-won respectability.' And across the social divide, eminent Victorians no longer look preposterous when photographed in repose. Victorian patriarchs lose their terrors when presiding over family picnics.

Along with these sentimental and heroic images, appropriated as Victorian values, are those qualities of stoical endurance which the deserving working class were expected to adopt. 'Old fashioned' ideas of duty and service are invoked against the 'indiscipline' of the present. Such characteristics are assigned not only to Victorian values but also to the changeless past. 'Victorian values' Mrs Thatcher tells us 'are perennial'; they are the qualities which make Britain great. Ironically, Victorian England becomes, like Merrie England for the actual Victorians in the hard times of the 1830s and 1840s, a symbol of vanished stabilities. As in other aggressive fantasies and the dream of primal bliss, it exists in allegory rather than actual time. It is a reverse image of the weaknesses and failings of the present; a measure of our fall.

For Mrs Thatcher, it also occupies the

Public pieties, private practices

By the time that Samuel Smiles wrote *Self Help* (1859) his earlier radicalism had contracted into a belief in rationality and self-culture. *Self Help* is *not* a collection of 'rags-to-riches' stories, but rather a series of essays on self-improvement. In the light of the book's insistence on self-denial, it is bizarre to note that a son of Smiles's married one of Mrs Beeton's daughters – the public pieties of an age are a poor guide to its private practices and indications of frugality should not be taken at their face value. Isabella Beeton's cookbook, 'though dedicated to 'economy' and directed at the middle classes, ministered to social as well as gastronomic fantasies. Soon after its publication in the early 1860s, Sam Beeton, Isabella's husband and publisher, embarked on a second career as a pornographer and the *English Woman's Domestic Magazine*, in which Mrs Beeton was first published, became notorious for its flagelatory prints. Sam lost his money in a bank crash. Mrs Beeton died at the age of 28. As has often been remarked, Victorian middle-class family life was not always as solid as it seemed.


SELF-HELP

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS OF CONDUCT AND PERSEVERANCE

BY SAMUEL SMILES, LL.D.

AUTHOR OF "LIVES OF THE ENGINEERS," ETC.

"This above all,—To thine own self be true
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."
SHAKESPEARE.

"Might I give counsel to any young man, I would say to him, Try to frequent the company of your betters. In books and in life, that is the most wholesome society; learn to admire rightly; the great pleasure of life is that. Note what great men admire: they admired great things; narrow spirits admire basely and worship meanly."—W. M. THACKERAY.

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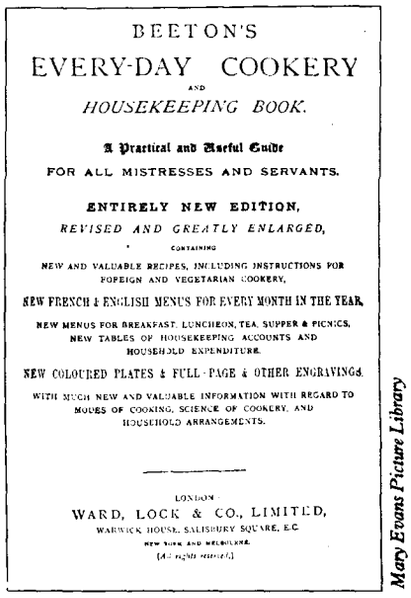
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enchanted space which memory accords to childhood, and in her account of Victorian times there is a constant elision between the precepts of her own childhood and those of an earlier epoch. In 'My Victorian Values' (*Standard* 15 April 1983) she sums them up as follows:

> We were taught to work jolly hard. We were taught to prove yourself; we were taught self-reliance; we were taught to live within our income. You were taught that cleanliness is next to godliness. You were taught self-respect. You were taught always to give a hand to your neighbour. You were taught tremendous pride in your country. All of these things are Victorian values. They are also perennial values.

Her phrases sound Victorian. She is actually describing her childhood in the 1920s and 1930s in semi-rural Grantham as the daughter of a comfortably-off shop owner, uttering the limited conventional wisdom which had percolated down at several generations remove.

Yet the idea that Britain owed its 19th century 'greatness' – the kind of greatness to which Tories respond – to such prudential virtues is absurd. She refers neither to the qualities of leadership, introduced in the spectacular growth of the Victorian Public and Preparatory schools, nor the cult of manly chivalry, which led Gordon to his death at Khartoum, sustained Scott in the Antarctic and reached its terrible apotheosis on the mud-flats of Flanders.

The men who conquered the Empire were inspired less by utilitarian calculations of self-interest than by dreams of glory and power. Those who ruled it modelled themselves not on Samuel Smiles but on the ancient Greeks. (The British in India never travelled without a copy of Thucydides'.) The captains of industry did not spend their time in the counting house practising economy and thrift. They built themselves ostentatious mansions and 'double suburban villas', and entertained splendidly. They were not content with amassing wealth or even with spending it. They sought authority and power. They gave monster tea-parties and outings to their employees. They ordered around vast armies of servants. They occupied the front pews of the local church and chapel. As their elaborate mausoleums testify they aspired in their own sphere to be Sun gods.

Britain became the workshop of the world through a whole series of speculative manias, in which money was coaxed from investors by dreams of impossible wealth. (In the case of the railway boom of 1844-47, the most sensational of these manias, economic historians have argued that the frauds perpetuated on the investing public were the actual condition of existence for so huge a mobilisation of resources.) Adulteration was the nether side of 19th century cheapness. Wallpaper manufacturers disguised flock papers with tints of emerald green. Pickle manufacturers coloured their sauces red with ammonium. Cotton manufacturers went in for the heavy sizing of inferior cloth. Silks were weighted with dye 'to make it feel thick'.

Men grew rich in the 19th century not by self-help but by hustling; by exploiting the labour of others; by jobbing for contracts; by dealing in housing and property; by banking; by inheriting landed property. Mr Rubinstein, in his study of the 'very wealthy', has shown that finance and commerce rather than industry accounted for the lion's share of large fortunes: in the whole of the 19th century, Manchester produced only a single cotton millionaire.

The dominant values in mid-Victorian Britain were not bourgeois but aristocratic. Wealth deferred to birth, trade to the professions, the professions to landed clients. The successful artist, like Landseer, joined the Hunt. The successful manufacturer, like Sir Titus Salt, took on the style of a merchant prince. The charisma attaching to the notion of the 'gentleman' rubbed off on to all kinds of subaltern roles, and in the 1860s and 1870s, when the Boat Race captured the imagination of proletarian London, it might be said to have established a cultural hegemony. The same period sees the appearance of the boarding school story as a staple of juvenile fiction. Army officers continued to comport themselves as sportsmen and gentlemen rather than professionals, notwithstanding the abolition of the purchase of commissions. Higher civil servants, despite the introduction of competitive examination, took their identity from a classical education. Gentlemen amateurs played a leading role in the early years of Association football; they dominated rowing, excluding the watermen and tradesmen.

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England, complained critics of the conduct of the Boer War, was a 'nation of amateurs'.

The dominance of aristocratic character ideals in English public life has sometimes been treated as an anachronistic survival. In fact, it seems to owe far more to 19th century institutional and cultural change. Not the least of the capacities of British society at that time was that of creating make-believe aristocracies and brand-new classes of gentlemen. Apart from the Public School there is the gentleman's club, which allowed the impecunious professional man to live in the heart of 'social' London; the gentrification of the professions and the professionalisation of the trades – solicitors and architects in the 1820s and 1830s, actors and actresses towards the century's close. Above all there was the vast extension of the British Empire, in which missionaries, traders and administrators were automatically cast in patrician roles.

THE DIFFUSION of an aristocratic idea possibly owed even more to the mid-century invention of the lady as an ideal type of womanhood. Deprived of any serious education and excluded from the public sphere, her status depended on such intangible qualities as 'refinement' and her apartness from the servants below. The stigmatisation of physical work was even stronger than in the case of gentlemen. In Vero Garrett's autobiography *Man in the Street* we see the creation of the lady through her bountiful acts and aristocratic image:

> To promote thrift among the homes of the poor a Mrs C. made a weekly visit to a number of homes in the district to collect small contributions paid into a Savings Fund. The wife of a wealthy solicitor, Mrs C. could boast of seven grown-up daughters who shared her interest in the work . . . Being the essence of kindness she not only brought sweet smiles to cheerless homes but also the more substantial boon of useful gifts. To my mother she was a saint from heaven . . . As the speech of Mrs C. was 'most aristocratic' it was made incumbent on us children, nurtured on the Brummagen jargon of the streets, to exhibit our aristocratic yearnings by not speaking unless spoken to and to say 'Good morning Mrs C.,' and 'Very well, thank you' in the approved styles.

Any account of Victorian values would have to confront the existence of social chasms inconceivably greater than any that we know today. Between the Upper Ten Thousand, with their round of country house parties, dinners and balls, on the one hand, and the tenement dwellers of places like Bethnal Green, often using the living room as their drying space, the disparities in wealth, living space, life chances and height, (one of Booth's observers, watching a Bethnal Green funeral in 1894, remarks 'not a man above 5 foot 4 inches in the crowd') could hardly be greater. They were enormously magnified by values – and in particular those values which have escaped the attention of Mrs Thatcher, those that valorised class.

The rich were not only wealthier than the poor: they were also, in their own eyes, *moral* aristocrats. The poor were not only a different class; according to the Social Darwinist theory, then the conventional wisdom, *they were another race*, less than human, a hereditary selection of the unfit, a diseased and tainted breed – what was called in the social science jargon of the day 'the residuum'. As the liberal-conservative writer Bagehot, a man much influenced by Darwin, put it in *Physics and Politics* in 1872.

> If men differ in anything they differ in the finesse and the delicacy of their moral intuitions . . . We need not go as far as the savages to learn that lesson; we need only talk to the English poor or to our servants, and we shall be taught it very completely. The lower classes in civilised countries, like all classes in uncivilised countries, are clearly wanting in the nicer part of those feelings which, taken together, we call the *sense of* morality. □

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Raphael Samuel

Cry God for Maggie, England & St George

CONSERVATIVES BELIEVE that patriotism is instinctual. They identify it with loyalty to the government (unless of course that government happens to be Liberal or Labour which, fortunately for them, it usually is not); and they believe that, when the country is fighting the foreigner, people rally instinctively to the flag.

All three things go together, and Conservatives are apt to believe that – like the family or the British national character – they are 'traditional'. In fact it was only in mid-Victorian times that this triad of claims was firmly established. Since it is one on which the government relied heavily at the time of the Falklands war, one could suggest that here indeed they have been attempting to restore 'Victorian values'. Interestingly it is not a lineage that Mrs Thatcher has pursued and it says something for her self-esteem that, instead of referring to Palmerston's gunboat adventures (one obvious parallel which suggests itself), she has preferred to play Churchill standing up to Hitler (would that that dictator's power had proved as fragile as General Galtieri's) and to invoke the shades of Waterloo (she has recently installed a painting of the Duke of

The motherland avenges her devoted sons in the Zulu war (as seen by 'Judy', 1879)

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Wellington in Downing Street).

The idea of a unified national self, or of a unified national character, rests on a myth, since 'the nation' is forever changing and subject to competing definitions on all sides. Nation is a symbolic complex, with a multiplicity of discrepant meanings at any given time and ruptures over time that are far more significant than the continuities. To compare late Victorian representations of the English as a master race (see the accompanying illustrations), with George Orwell's gentle fantasy of a nation of flower-growers *(The Lion and the Unicorn)*, or Noel Coward's of a people of gardeners *(This Happy Breed)* , is to leap the chasm in popular memory and national imagination opened up by the battles of the Somme and poignantly signified by the memorials which stand on our village greens. The idea that the English people are distinguished by a spirit of 'fair play' and 'tolerance' – a favourite theme in patriotic rhetoric – hardly seems applicable to a country which burnt witches in the 17th century and which was jailing people for being homosexual as recently as the 1950s.

So far from being distinguished by their modesty – another favourite theme – the English, or at any rate those who serve as their public spokespeople, seem never happier than when lavishing compliments on the supreme virtues of their constitution, the stability of their temperament, and the excellence and fairness of their laws. As a disenchanted French visitor put it in the early 18th century: 'I do not think there is a people more prejudiced in its own favour than the British people . . . They look on foreigners in general with contempt and think nothing is as well done elsewhere as in their own country.'

THERE WAS CLEARLY no unified national consciousness in the Middle Ages when rich and poor spoke different languages and territorial allegiances were to a local lord. Chaucer's 'parfit gentil knyght', who is often taken as the prototype of the English gentleman, seems not to have had any sense of being English at all. He had fought the 'hethen in Turkye' and at Alexandria 'whan it was wonne', but the loyalties he proclaims are to his liege lord and to 'cristendom'. Glimmerings of a more national consciousness have been suggested for Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, written at the time of the Wars of the Roses, though the author himself was a lifelong baronial *frondeur*. There is a dramatic increase in national self-consciousness in the 16th century, with the rise of the nation state and especially (it may be) with the triumph of English as the language of literary expression, in the century's last decades. (Tories in search of sustenace for their wars no doubt draw inspiration from the speech before Agincourt in *Henry V*.)

Even so, the 17th century Civil War suggests that English people were still able to separate love of country from loyalty to government; while the theory of the Norman Yoke (splendidly rescued from oblivion by Christopher Hill) offered both a class interpretation of English history and an alternative version of what it was to be English: landlords were portrayed as the descendants of the Norman barons, the common people of the 'free-born' Anglo-Saxons. In Victorian racism this theory was given a sinister twist and aligned to the Aryan myth and made into an argument for white and imperial supremacy – excellently documented in L. P. Curtis's *Anglo-Saxons and Celts*.

In the 18th century though, when the British appeared for the first time as a military people and government fought a whole series of national wars, matters seem more familiar. Even so, Marlborough's Wars – to take the example of Sir Winston Churchill's most illustrious ancestor – were regarded as 'Whig wars' and bitterly opposed by many Tories. The early Hanoverians faced a proclaimedly disloyal Jacobite opposition. In London, a city which once had a fine

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The master race having fun: King Prempeh's submission after the Ashanti rebellion (1896)

tradition in defying governments, there was a popular Jacobite following, which served as a focal point for other discontents.

In Oxford University, that citadel of High Toryism, the toast of 'the King across the Water' was exuberantly drunk. (According to T. E. Kebbel's memoirs there was still a strain of secret Jacobitism in the country Toryism of his 1830s childhood.) On the other side of the religious and cultural divide, nonconformists – stigmatised by all kinds of civil disabilities – seem to have had a wholesome capacity for siding with the 'country's' (i.e. the government's) enemies.

Many openly sympathised with the colonists in the period of the American Revolution; and they also figure frequently in the early 1790s among the friends of revolutionary France. The fear of invasion, in 1798, as at many other times in history, seems to have produced a powerful upsurge of national unity and self-consciousness, but it is by no means apparent at other times during the Napoleonic wars. 'Remember the Bastille' was a slogan chalked up during a London food riot of 1801. The wars, after all, were also the period of the Luddite risings in Nottinghamshire and the West Riding. To see the Home Office papers in the period of the agitation about the Orders in Council (1811) and the upsurge of popular radicalism at the time is to imagine that England, far from being united, was on the brink of insurrection.

In the long years of peace between 1815 and the outbreak of the Crimean War, patriotism (as Hugh Cunningham has suggested) was a language of opposition rather than of government. Reactionaries, in Britain as in Europe (e.g. Castlereagh), looked to legitimacy rather than to nationality as the conservative force which would preserve the traditional order. The Whigs came to power in 1830 on a programme of 'Peace, Retrenchment and Reform'.

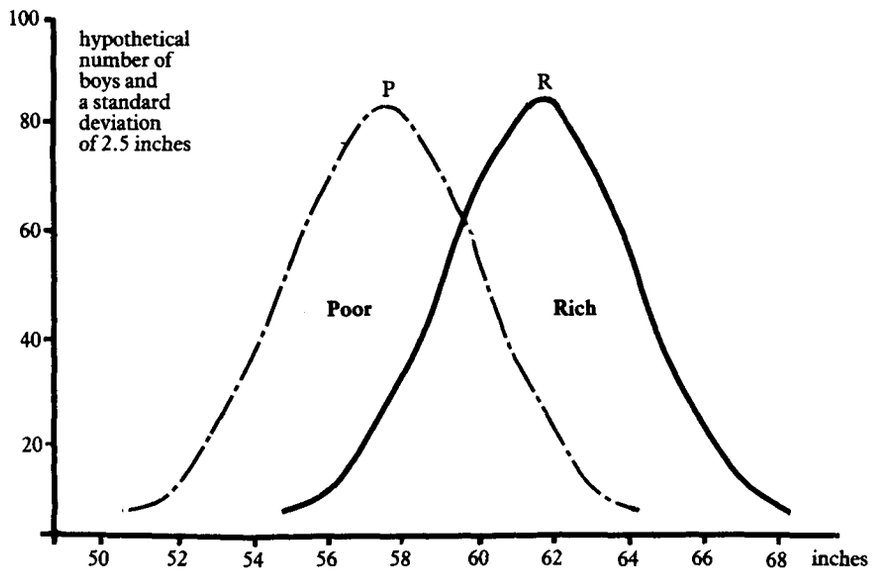
The free trade policies of Canning and Peel encouraged a general suspicion of national jealousies. Cobden and the more ideological Free Traders (as also, in another discourse, the Chartists) championed the principles of universalism, and at least some of the effects of this imprinted themselves on high policy.

The Great Exhibition of 1851 was intended to epitomise England's pacific intentions to the world and to celebrate the progress of industry and art. Colonies, in the political rhetoric of the day, were freely referred to as expensive encumberances – as in Disraeli's famous reference to 'the millstones round our neck'. In another sphere, the anti-slavery and humanitarian movement of the early 19th century was propogating a version of Christian internationalism in which the common origin of different peoples was stressed.

It was, I would argue, the Crimean war that initiated, or crystallised, a whole complex of changes in which romantic nationalism, aristocratic fantasy, 'muscular Christianity' and colonial conquest transformed the nation's understanding of itself, creating what we now think of as high Victorian 'patriotism'. □

High and mighty

Roderick Floud



P=Average height of poor working-class boys 57.9 inches at age 14
R=Average height of boys from the professional class 61.4 inches at age 14

CLASS differences in Victorian England were more than a matter of statistics of health and mortality; they could be seen every day in the bodies or rich and poor. The upper and middle classes were taller and heavier than the poor, as is shown in evidence collected by the British Association for the Advancement of Science in the 1880s. Fourteen-year-old boys from the professional classes were on average 3.5 inches taller than working-class children, while the gap between public schoolboys of that age from Marlborough College and boys from industrial schools was a staggering seven inches. It is well-established that height follows the normal distribution or bell-shaped curve (with a standard range around the average) and this means that, as the diagram shows, 76 per cent of the upper-class boys were taller than all but 24 per cent of the working-class boys. Although in adults these class differences were narrowed they were still large. People are very good at judging relative height and these differences would have led to a powerful impression of two nations; for the upper classes could literally look down on their servants. Average height is a very precise indicator of the nutritional state of groups in the population, reflecting not only food intake but also health and work effort. The leisured, lavish and moral family life of Archdeacon Grantly produced the tall and healthy Griselda, while illness, long hours of work and poor food produced the small and weakly orphan children of Bleak House.

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Pawnographic values

Mary Chamberlain and Ruth Richardson

IN 1902 Harvey & Thompson, a London firm of jewellers and pawnbrokers, were prosecuted for doing business on Whitsunday. Their defence was that poor people liked to have their best clothes for the holiday, and that there had been so many people trying to redeem their pledges the previous night that they were forced to open on Sunday to serve them all. That Saturday, 2,332 pledges had been redeemed.

Until the creation of the Welfare State, the visit to the 'pop shop' or 'Uncle's' was a regular event for many working-class people. It was an essential part of the domestic economy. It wasn't just luxuries that were pawned – they had long since gone to satisfy the Poor Law or the Means Test. Charities were well aware of this. The Charter Street Ragged School, in Angel Meadow (the worst slum in Manchester) donated clogs to barefooted children on Christmas Day – each clog embossed with the message: NOT TO BE PAWNED. It was essentials that had to be sacrificed – clothing and bedding – in order to avoid starvation or the workhouse.

Victorian Values?

I remember the time that our Mum said to me: 'Katie, look after them shoes because you know they've got to go back pawn Monday. And if you muck them up, they won't give you money . . .'

. . . Well, I had to go without practically, myself, to give to the children, you know what I mean? And my mum used to send us round bits of beef, but she was as hard up as a church mouse, you know. But a fortnight before I had Ada, there was her clothes what I was going to have her put in as soon as she was born, all in the pawn shop for 1/6 . . .

People pawned necessities to pay for necessities.

. . . I used to do me washing. Iron the sheets, make them all nice and square, put them in the pillowcase, put them behind the baby's head in the (pram), got to the pawnship, look round to see if anybody was coming. And that was enough money for me rent . . .

My chap came home one day from work and he said, I had a stew on, so he said: 'Will be long? Only,' he says, 'I'm going to a meeting about the (means test)' . . . Anyway, he said 'Do us a favour, mate, while I'm having me tea, get me trousers out.' I'd only pawned them, hadn't I? So I goes over to me mother's . . . when I come back, my daughter said, 'Daddy, ain't half been going off about you, and he's tore your best coat up, Mum.' When I went in the front room, there it was, ripped in half, all on the floor. Anyway, when he's come in, I've gone to bed . . . 'Wake up!' he said, 'you're not asleep. Wake up. Where's my trousers? I suppose they're in the pawnshop; when I walk along there'll be the crease lines.' I said 'I had a penny to have them hung up . . .'

Most people who went to the pawnbroker were women – and it often led to domestic violence.

. . . One day she decided she had to pawn her wedding ring. Now that was a crime. Oh, it was terrible . . . So she buys one out of Woolworth's and gets her own off . . . my father never knew her ring was in pawn; because I think he would've throttled her . . . So we go up the pawnship and get the ring out. Well. When we came back . . . we couldn't get the Woolworth's ring off. Oh, it was a panic. And she was saying 'Your father will kill me, your father will kill me.' And she had a big red finger, because it was on her paralysed hand, you see. And every time . . . you pulled the fingers out, after a while it would take your hand and close up, with your hand in it. We finally got it off. But had he've known, he would have gone mad . . .

Since the Thatcher government has been in power, pawning has increased dramatically – most markedly in the last two years. Clothes are no longer acceptable pledges. It is jewellery and luxuries, like cameras and radios, which are sacrificed to keep the bailiffs at bay. The pawnshops have changed their image, too. Gone are the familiar parcels and lockers, and, in their place, smoked glass and discreet cubicles reminiscent of a building society. As they have always done, pawnshops offer instant credit. Their interest rates remain as high as they have always been. And it is poor people who use them, as they always have done, for they do not have access to credit and easy loans.

Harvey and Thompson's have now closed their retail business to concentrate on pawnbroking. Although their trade does not run into thousands, they estimate their customers in terms of hundreds per day. The new Victorian value? □

Courtesy Manchester Studies Unit

The crowd awaiting the arrival of the Duchess of Sutherland's carriage at the opening of an extension to the Charter Street Ragged School (1900)

The quotes used here come from oral history interviews with people who used Harvey & Thompson's Walworth Road shop earlier this century.

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Michael Ignatieff

Law and order in a city of strangers

IT IS NOT every day, still less during an election campaign, that a Lord Chief Justice of England allows himself to play ventriloquist's dummy for Conservative Central Office. Yet such appears to be the comic pose struck by the current Chief Justice, Lord Lane, when he addressed the National Association of Prison Visitors in London last week. The legal affairs correspondent of *The Times* reports him as saying that in order to reverse the upward trend on the traffic in drugs and pornography, a return to 'Victorian morality' was essential.

Presumably the Lord Chief Justice knows that Victorian values mean different things to different people. One such value, not Victorian in provenance, but certainly enshrined in Bagehot, is the independence of the judiciary from politics. Lest, therefore, his audience be tempted to think that *this* was the value he stood for, the Lord Chief Justice spelled out his creed in the authentic vocabulary of Mr Tebbit, Mrs Thatcher, Mr Whitelaw and Mr Teddy Taylor. he delivered himself of a woeful peroration of negatives:

> The sanction of parental authority had gone, discipline in schools had gone and the authority of the schoolmaster was undermined. Financial sanctions had also gone and while not wishing a return to pre-welfare state days, Lord Lane said, there was no doubt any potential criminal would then think a long time before consigning his wife and children to the workhouse.

If this is a veiled suggestion that prisoners' dependents ought to be taken off supplementary benefit, then we can assume that the Lord Chief Justice takes Victorian morality to mean punishing the innocent for the crimes of the guilty. How such a suggestion is supposed to deepen anyone's respect for the judiciary and for the rule of law is anyone's guess. But that is the point. When it comes down to it, the Victorian values for which the Lord Chief Justice speaks are not the values of the rule of law and the political impartiality of the jury, but the values expressed in workhouse gruel, treadwheels, shot drill and the convict stone quarry.

Yet even Chief Justices have to wake from their reveries of repression. He admits that the British people are unlikely to vote for a return to 'pre-welfare state days'. Respect for law would hardly survive a forced march backwards to the mythic Victorian past, and in any event, as justices know to their cost, 'short sharp shocks' have a way of bouncing off the backs of those they are rained upon. Beneath all his resolute rhetoric about Victorian remedies, a plaintive sense of the ultimate futility of repression creeps into the judge's musings:

> Lord Lane said people tended to wash their hands of responsibility in the tackling of crime, leaving it to judges, probation staff and the prison service . . .

Apparently a society which puts its faith in judges is failing to take up its proper moral burden. The judge goes on:

> The big cities also meant social sanctions had disappeared. People did not know their neighbours and even if they did, it was a matter of total indifference whether or not he was convicted of a crime.

No one, he concludes with affecting pathos, seems to give 'a fig' for the Ten Commandments anymore.

This heartfelt jeremiad about the corruption of our age is full of interesting contradictions. On the one hand, the Tory government and its pliant legal Establishment call for further state power to repress the rise in crime; on the other, they lament the erosion of individual moral responsibility which seems to occur when law and order becomes a state monopoly. If, as we know, the punitive sanction is the one power in her arsenal (beside the power to make war) which Mrs Thatcher allows herself to approve, it is also true that she, and apparently some of her judges, are aware that repression has a paradoxical effect on private civic virtue.

Every tightening of the penal screw, therefore, is accompanied by a paradoxical backward glance at the good old days when the trinity of community patriarchs – father, employer and policeman – supervised the moral order without the awesome technology of state surveillance. With every new ratchet turn given to the upward spiral of law and order expenditure, Tory politicians and judges look back fondly to a mythic past in which the community, not the state, policed itself. Lord Chief Justices and Tory politicians have no monopoly on this nostalgia. Look at the mythological evocation on the Labour side of the idea of 'community policing' – as if there *were* communities to whom policing could be returned.

If this nostalgia crosses the political divide, it will hardly do to regard Mrs Thatcher's invocation of Victorian values in the law and order debate simply as a sentimental cover for increasingly authoritarian practice. On both sides of the political divide, the law and order debate has become a lament for the collapse of social solidarity in the modern city. Sometimes the lament is authoritarian, sometimes populist, but whatever its tone, its focus is not so much on crime statistics themselves but on the feeling that people nowadays care less for each other, take less responsibility for each other's welfare and are greedier and less trustworthy. It is remarkable, for example, that explanations of crime and riot which evoke the materialism of consumer society ('Looting takes the waiting out of wanting') figure not only among Tories who give their fig about the Ten Commandments, but also among socialists who think they can remember a time when neighbours never used to lock their doors, and when everyone 'shared' their hardships. If it *is* the case that anxieties about law and order are not about mugging or rape on their own but about society's apparent inability to speak and act as a moral entity, then it will take a lot more than 'community policing' or 'short sharp shocks' to put these anxieties to rest and to rebuild

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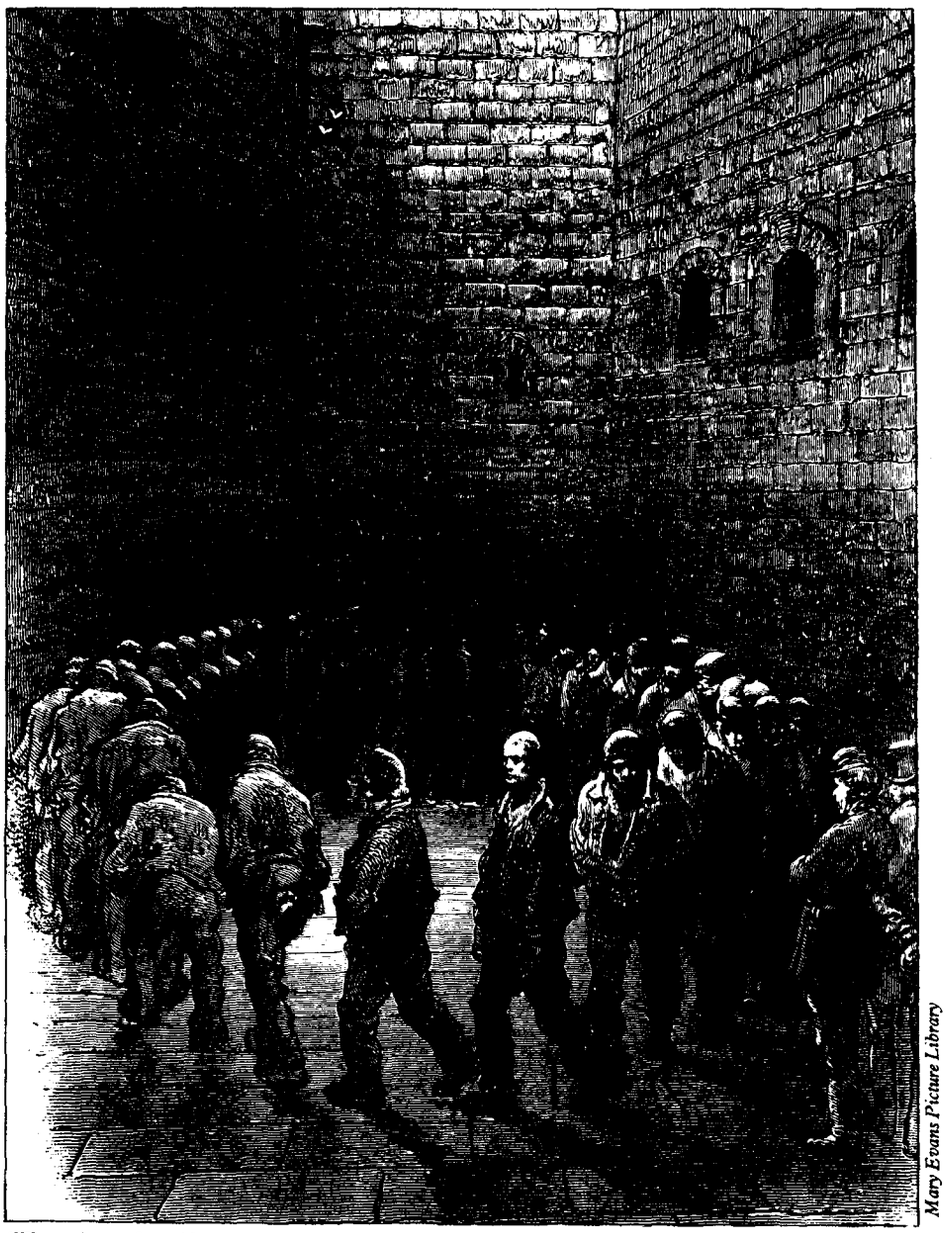

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'The values of workhouse gruel, treadwheels, shot drill and the convict stone quarry . . .'

the trust among strangers which is the soul of civic life.

WHAT IS ironic about contemporary nostalgia for the moral solidarity of Victorian society is that Victorian 'public opinion' – the opinion of Parliament, the newspapers, the periodicals and the clubs of the middle classes – was no less anxious than ours. It shares with us an object of fear which first took shape then and has been present ever since: the city of strangers.

To be sure, the fashions in fear change. Today it is the young black teenager, yesterday it was the 'street Arab'. But the fear is more continuous than it seems because its object is that gulf which opened up in the last century between the private realm of the household where we form our attachments and bonds of trust and a public realm which today risks being whittled down to a transportation corridor through which we hurry from the safety of one private realm to another. If this is the gulf where Victorian fears and our own meet, then Labour ought to change the terms in which it argues about public order. It ought to talk less about prisons and policemen and more about rebuilding civic trust among strangers in public places – by giving tenants control over their estates; by creating clubs, bars, gyms and small businesses where kids can create a civic space of their own between the institutions of home, school and dole office; by creating parks, public monuments and estates which, as the Victorians had the confidence to do, have the kind of beauty and respect for human scale which demands pride and trust from those who use them.

What is at stake here is giving ordinary people responsibility over their own civic space: by helping them to become responsible for the graffiti which disfigures their walls, for 'other people's children', who threaten or rob pensioners, for the isolated and abandoned people near them who need help. Mrs Thatcher talks up her own brand of responsibility – it is the core value in her Victorian values – but the only meaning she can give it is being held responsible in court. There is another meaning of responsibility, one which is very close to the idea of solidarity; its institutional precondition is popular democracy.

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There is nothing wrong with Victorian words like responsibility. The challenge of politics is to win the battle for the future of their meaning. If Mrs Thatcher is winning that battle, it is not, I think, because the Victorian rhetoric touches a chord with some primeval individualism in the British electorate. It is because she has managed to solder an appeal to the past to a claim on the future. She has managed to make hers the party of the future, of progress, while reassuring the timid that it is a Victorian kind of progress she has in mind.

Actually, of course, no party has been more adept at aligning itself with the forces of tradition, and no party has been more ruthless at liquidating tradition when it stands in the way of interest. If Mrs Thatcher is standing in the name of Victorian values, her public spending policies are laying waste to the magnificent Victorian heritage of railways, stations, canals, parks and bridges. Yet merely pointing this out is not enough.

Labour may think its problem is convicing its electorate that its policies in 1983 stand within the concensus of the Labour tradition of the past. In fact its problem may actually be that it is seen as a party of the past. Its claim to rule in 1983 is perilously dependent on the evocation of the myth of 1945 and the defense of the historical achievements of British trade unionism. Not since Wilson has it tried seriously to make itself understood as the party of progress. Too many workers perhaps have been burned by 'the white heat of technology' to make the party much of a champion of science, technology and the future. Yet if Thatcher wins, it will be in some measure because she has managed the trick of appearing to stand for the future while speaking the language of the past.

This trick has to be shown up for what it is. Many Labour supporters have been strangely bewitched by the carefully cultivated aura of radicalism which surrounds her policies. She says she has 'changed everything' with her coming to power, but what she has actually done is merely negative. She has smashed up the welfare concensus of post-war politics, but in its place she has offered only the sonorous emptiness of Victorian values.

Yet simply by doing nothing – by leaving the value of the currency, the unemployment level, the interest rates and the flow of capital to the ruthless determinations of the international market economy – she will expose British society to changes which are hardly reconcilable with her nostalgic Smilesian vision. Her Smilesian hero – the enterprising and industrious small businessman – is to be exposed, ever more ruthlessly, to the full blast of competition from the state-aided multinationals of other economies. The society which her law and order discourse says ought to stand for something will surrender more of its economic sovereignty to the law of the global market. It will also surrender more of that moral sovereignty over itself for which the Lord Chief Justice sheds his tears. □

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Gareth Stedman Jones

Poor Laws and market forces

THERE IS a certain logic to Mrs Thatcher's espousal of 'Victorian values'. Just as Keynes in the 1930s could consider his critique of orthodox economic policy as part of a wider Bloomsbury revolt against Victorianism, so it is unsurprising to find Mrs Thatcher summoning back a ghostly army of eminent Victorians to add sombre endorsement to her 'resolute approach'. Between ideas about morals and ideas about economics there has always been a close tie, and nowhere more so than in the area of social policy where the two preoccupations necessarily converge. It is clear, for example, that in much Tory thinking there exists some close if impalpable link between full employment and 'permissiveness' or 'declining standards', just as it is evident that Mrs Thatcher's own real preoccupation is, ultimately, not so much economic recovery itself as the restitution of a desired pattern of belief and behaviour, from which, it is assumed, 'genuine' economic recovery will in due course follow.

In more formal terms, what this conviction amounts to is the belief that the health of the economy and of the polity is dependent upon the moral code that informs the practice of its individual participants. What engenders the requisite morality, however, is none other than the market. There have been many different fantasies about the market. This particular version is imaginatively fired less by its freedoms than by its constraints. What is to be admired in the markets is its disciplinary function as an impersonal agent of the moral law. The market in effect is a system of natural justice. It not only allocates resources but, by the same measure, rewards virtue and punishes vice. The task of the legislator, therefore, is to remove 'artificial' contraints on its operation in order that morality should prevail.

The historian could certainly discover a similarity between these beliefs and a certain set of 'Victorian values'. However, they are not the values that Mrs Thatcher imagines she is invoking when she speaks of Samuel Smiles, nor are they actually the values that animated most Victorian people. They were rather the 'values' of its ruling circles – a set of assumptions which dominated official thinking between the 1820s and the end of the 19th century – indeed, arguably through to Britain's final abandonment of the gold standard in 1931.

Thatcherism is not simply a peculiarly monetarist form of the belief that growth in the economy is best achieved through the free operation of market forces, the removal of state interference so far as is practicable and the encouragement of habits of resourcefulness and self-reliance among the people at large. Mrs Thatcher's vision of the market is quite different from that of Cobden or the 19th century popularisers of Adam Smith. Nor is her monetarism simply a technical concern to squeeze out inflation as a prelude to the restoration of a market pricing mechanism mirroring 'real' economic relations. Describing her ideal world to Brian Walden on *Weekend World*, she stated: 'I want everyone to have their own personal property stake . . . I want them to have their own savings which retain their value, so they can pass things on to their children.' The yearning is not so much for the 'buccaneering' 19th century entrepreneurial spirit of Hudson 'the railway king' or even Sir Freddie Laker, but rather a world of immutable values in which there will be fixed and predictable correlations between good behaviour (working hard, living within one's means) and material reward.

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Soup kitchen charity: an 1867 engraving shows the reality behind the myths about Victorian market forces

It was a vision similar to that which inspired one particular and pre-eminently Victorian variant of political economy – that associated with Huskisson and the liberal toryism of the 1820s, with Peel in the 1830s and 40s and, in the second half of the 19th century, with the continuation of these policies in the Liberal Party under Gladstone and the attempt to inculcate these values in the population at large associated with such influential Victorian institutions as the Charity Organisation Society.

Liberal conservatism, as it developed from the 1820s to the 1840s is associated with the restoration of the gold standard (1819), penal reform and the institution of the new police force in the 1820s, support for the New Poor Law (1834) and resistance to factory legislation in the 1830s and the Bank Charter Act and the Repeal of the Corn Laws during Peel's Administration of 1841 to 1846. In the mid-Victorian years in its Gladstonian form it was associated with sound finance, the continuing reduction of tariffs, the ambition to eliminate income tax and the further tightening up of poor law administration. The policy pursued by liberal conservative leaders was not a simple implementation of the thought of Adam Smith or Ricardo, since their political economy was amenable to more radical interpretation (it could, for instance, be read as an implicit condemnation of the role of the landlord as parasitic rentier, or as an admission of the damaging effects of machinery on employment). Nor was it initially conceived as a wooing of the growing industrial middle class. In policy terms, the strategy associated with liberal conservatism was born of a reluctant acceptance that the ideal of agricultural self-sufficiency embodied in the 1815 Corn Law was impracticable and therefore that English foreign and commercial policy must henceforward be based upon the export of manufactures and the import of wheat. Given this necessity, however, the aim was not so much to forward industrial growth as to preserve and protect the established political and religious constitution in the face of the disruptive social changes that such a switch might entail.

Liberal conservatism has sometimes been represented as a flexible and forward-looking adjustment of conservatism to the politics of an industrial society. In fact, however, as the researches of Boyd Hilton have shown, its motivating beliefs were systematic and doctrinaire. Liberal conservatism was not simply a species of politics. It was also a fully fledged social philosophy, constructed out of a highly influential fusion of political economy and evangelical Christian theology associated with a now forgotten figure, the Scottish divine, Thomas Chalmers.

Chalmers's work was avidly followed by Huskisson, Peel and Gladstone and it continued to form the inspiration of the most influential group of social policy makers in

Leicester Square, London, 'hospice' in 1883: The system tried to separate the deserving from the undeserving poor

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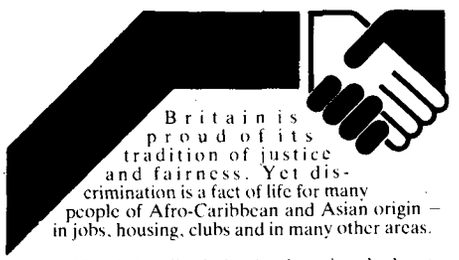
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London slum children queuing for free meals in the last year of Queen Victoria's reign

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the last third of the 19th century – the Charity Organisation Society. In Chalmers's vision, God ordained the system of free competition as a system of natural and Christian justice. If the state refrained from interference in the economy, whether in the form of tariffs, protective legislation, easy credit facilities or relief to the indigent, then a self-regulating system would come into being, in which the frugal, industrious and godly would be rewarded, and the idle, the profligate and the speculator would be punished – on earth as in heaven. Moreover, if taxation and poor relief were, so far as possible, eliminated, then deference could be maintained in the new towns as much as in the countryside, since the rich would have maximum discretion in the disposal of their income, leaving them free to discharge the Christian duty of Charity; the poor would be duly grateful since they would come to see that charity depended on kindness and personal visitation, not upon rights or ransom. At the official level, it was this version of 'Victorian values' which triumphed between the 1840s and the 1900s, rather than that of the Benthamites which would have eliminated face to face relations of deference and paternalism, or that of Radicals and Chartists which would have established minimum wages, democratic government and the right to non-penal forms of relief.

LIKE MRS THATCHER, liberal conservatives were entranced by the notion of a self-regulating mechanism in which the laws of Christian morality and the laws of a capitalist economy would coincide. But then as now, the system was far less effective in moralising the rich than in disciplining the poor. Peel's Bank Charter Act and the deflationary monetary policies which had preceded it were aimed at squeezing out the speculator and restricting paper credit. But speculative manias continued, culminating in the commercial crises of 1847, 1857 and 1866 – and in each case the Bank Charter Act had to be suspended in order to prevent the entire credit system from crashing to the ground.

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tional picture of Victorian society, statistical research shows that the really substantial Victorian fortunes were made not by Northern manufacturers, but by merchants, bankers and stock and insurance brokers mainly in the home counties, As the wealth of this affluent and predominantly Southern stratum continued to increase, so did its propensity to gentrification and conspicuous consumption – servants and carriages proliferated, and so did the Charities of London. But the predominant form taken by charity was anything but a private relationship between the self and God (the liberal conservative ideal). It is better seen – or so at least it was seen by most Victorian novelists – as a form of conspicuous expenditure, in which the newly arrived Mr and Mrs Moneybags might find their names printed on embossed letter-heads alongside titled lords and ladies.

In the form in which they accumulated their wealth and in the manner in which they disposed of their income, the Victorian rich had little beyond the wrath of God to restrain them. But for the great bulk of Victorian society – its working classes – there was little choice but to take Victorian values seriously. For they were faced with far more tangible and earthly sanctions. Without 'character' in a frequently overstocked labour market (and even with one, if unlucky enough to be visibly ageing), they might fail to retain employment; if sick, they might find themselves forced to ask for charity; and if they failed to show evidence of 'thrift' and 'self-reliance', they might find themselves classified among the 'undeserving' and consigned to the workhouse, with its loss of citizen rights, its harsh labour regimes and its segregation of parent from child, man from wife. Such a threat was by no means remote when it was estimated as late as the 1890s that one in seven workers might end their lives as a pauper.

In her evocation of Victorian values, Mrs Thatcher spoke of a situation in which 'everyone' was 'strong and independent of government', and she went on to state: 'Winston put it best. You want a ladder, upwards, anyone, no matter what their background, can climb, but a fundamental safety net below which no one can fall.' In fact, there was nothing new in Churchill's dictum. Lord Palmerston was making frequent use of the ladder metaphor in the 1850s, and as for the 'safety net', that principle had already been stated forcefully by Lord Goschen, the President of the Poor Law Board in 1869. It was, according to him, 'the fundamental doctrine of the English Poor Laws' and 'relief is given, not as a matter of charity, but of legal obligation'.

However, if 'independence of government' was indeed a distinctive feature of Victorian society, for most people it was fear of falling rather than hopes of advancement which provided the spur. While Palmerston extolled the ladder and Goschen talked solemnly of the right to relief, the Newcastle, Taunton and Clarendon Commissions were busy narrowing pre-existing opportunities for social mobility through education (except for those already possessing the means to aspire to be considered gentlemen), while the Poor Law Board was engaged upon a campaign to eliminate the loophole of outdoor relief and to accentuate the disgrace of pauperdom by publishing lists of those applying for relief.

For its progenitors and supporters, the attainment of a self-regulating mechanism which by its own momentum would inculcate 'Victorian values' always remained tantalisingly just over the horizon. The mechanism worked in a negative sense. After a desperate resistance in the 1830s in the northern industrial districts, the working classes sullenly accepted the new medicine for poverty, just as today it has proved possible to secure a cowed and defensive working population through the threat of large-scale unemployment. But the mechanism, far from being self-regulating, proved to need constant vigilance and repair. Local poor law unions tended to relax the strict regulations so lovingly detailed from the centre. Old and bad habits of giving outdoor relief to widows and the aged poor kept creeping back into the system. 'Clever paupers', the 1860s equivalent of 'social security scroungers', kept threatening to sabotage the machine by evading the distinction between the deserving and the undeserving. 'Indiscriminate charity' reached such a pitch that it seemed on the point of sapping the will to work – or so at least ran the nightmare that haunted the architects of the system. By the 1870s, it was thought that the system could only be made viable not just by making the condition of 'the able-bodied pauper' even 'less eligible' but by controlling and channelling the flow of charity as well. Such was the ambition of the Charity Organisation Society. The principle of its work, according to Canon Barnett, was that 'we aim at decreasing not suffering but sin'.

The poor law worked because of its deterrent effect, not because its principles were ever accepted by the bulk of the working population. Even among local ratepayers, what won acceptance were not the principles of 1834 so much as the promise of a cheap way of relieving the poor. As a consequence, the whole 'self-regulating' mechanism, far from coming to be accepted as a species of natural law, could only be made to operate so long as the bulk of the working classes were excluded from the suffrage, both at the national and at the local level. Once the political and administrative system grudgingly began to yield in the face of democratic pressures, 'Victorian values' gradually began to go under.

But even among the propertied classes, 'Victorian values' scarcely operated as a shared code of conduct. They were always more the topic of inter-class than intra-class discourse. Homilies about thrift, sobriety and self-reliance were of use when addressing the errant servant, the unemployed workman, the mendicant Irishman or the child in the nursery; or they might have composed the preferred mode of grumbling about the lower orders in clubs, drawing rooms and chambers of commerce. But they were not suitable forms of admonition among one's peers. They were 'values' to be visited on social inferiors, not a code of conduct by which the generality of the affluent aspired to live.

Finally, and most damningly, the liberal conservative ideal of evangelical political economy came to be doubted by some of its own most committed adherents. Canon Barnett, after more than a decade of missionary effort in Whitechapel, declared that 'the outcome of scientific charity is the working man too thrifty to pet his children and too respectable to be happy'. And the eminent Victorian economist Alfred Marshall came to similar conclusions, with a message that Mrs Thatcher might also do well to ponder: 'Patience in bearing other people's sufferings is as clear a duty as patience in bearing one's own, but it may be carried too far.' □

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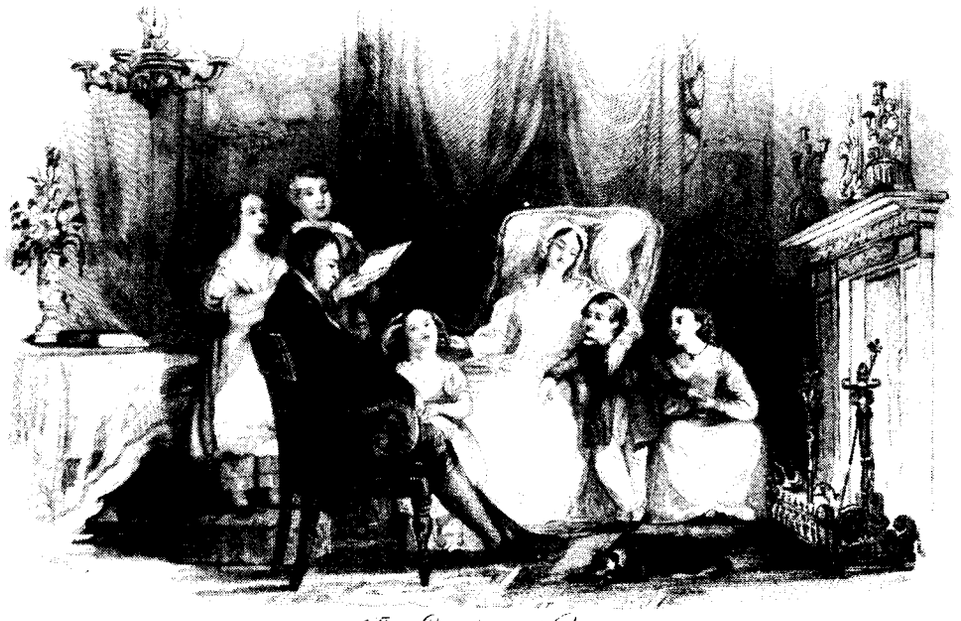

Illustration from Family Secrets *by Mrs Ellis*

Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall

Home sweet home

'HAPPY FAMILIES' was a game of printed cards invented and produced by middle-class entrepreneurs. Our image of that typical family conjures up parents, a large group of children, perhaps a maiden aunt or grandmother, seated in a comfortable parlour, bright fire in the grate, the mingled scents of beeswax polish and roast beef, servant in cap and apron hovering attentively in the background. This tableau is understood to have been underpinned by a particular set of values: hard work and enterprise, domestic serenity and familial feelings, with charity towards the poor in general and its own employees in particular. Children were taught morality if not religion at their mother's knee. Fathers gave guidance in worldly affairs and necessary discipline. When illness struck, the patient was nursed at home by devoted female relatives. Idealised homes like these were the fount from which sprang the sons who founded the Empire and made Britain great. As the author of 'Happy Homes' wrote in 1881 in an issue of *After Work: Home Reading for the Family Circle:* 'Happy homes are among the chief causes of a prosperous country. The family constitution is a divine and indispensable arrangement.'

Yet even at the time this ideal did not go unchallenged. Samuel Butler's *The Way of all Flesh* or Dickens's *Dombey and Son* provide blistering contemporary critiques of some aspects of the Victorian family, although both authors are also powerfully drawn to facets of that ideal. It was a *model*, as much an ideal in its own time as in ours. Its ideological presence was hard to escape in Victorian society.

The particular, historical reasons why that model was created have to be understood. But one of the problems is that 'the family' tends to be thought about as a natural or 'given' institution. The discovery of the Cambridge Group that in quantitative terms the family has been nuclear since the 17th Century (that is a small group of mother, father and children), has helped to sustain the illusion that the nuclear form was dictated by nature. But the family, like every other institution in society, is historically specific. Although there may be continuities in terms of the size, structure and organisation, even in some familial values, there are also always important discontinuities.

The use of the word 'family' to mean father, mother and children is itself relatively recent. The word – which derives from the root meaning slave – used to include all those who lived under the authority of the *pater familias*, including servants and apprentices. More significantly, it excluded the master/father himself.

In the 18th century there was a distinctive pattern of power and authority within the household of the middling ranks, resting primarily with the man, the legal and public representative of the family. Wives had no independent legal identity. In a world where property relations defined everything they could not own property, unless a special settlement was made in the Court of Equity. In a world where new relations of property were inscribed in the law, they could not enter partnerships, make contracts or be sued. Nevertheless, at a time when the household was still normally the main unit of production, wives were crucial to the family economy. Marriage could be understood as an *informal partnership*. This was

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substantially changed by the massive upheavals associated with the French Revolution, rapid industrialisation and population growth.

UNDER THESE new conditions, a middle class formation emerged, separate from the aristocracy (and critical in many ways of their culture), while also wanting to separate themselves from the mass of wage labourers below them. Becoming a public force in civil society, they felt called upon to promote *their* version of the ideal life, central to which was a new model of the family. As a group they were growing in power and wealth, asserting their class politically. They were also beset by acute anxiety. Their doubts were associated not only with the threat to the long-established social hierarchies but also with an economy subject to extreme fluctuations. Before the advent of limited liability, bankruptcy meant personal as well as business failure; and it was frequent. In this context 'serious Christianity', which enjoyed a revival from the end of the 18th century, had considerable appeal. The Evangelicals, a reforming group within the Anglican Church, led by such figures as Hannah More and William Wilberforce, became increasingly popular. Their theology was based on individual conversion and moral certainty about their central task – the transformation of the manners and morals of the English people as a bulwark against the infection of revolutionary ideas from France.

The family was central to the Evangelical cause, the main site to which it was addressed. Serious Christianity demanded the religious household, a base from which to counter the evils of the world outside, a haven within which to form young souls. The Puritan notion of the home as a 'little kingdom' was transformed into the Victorian concept of the Home as Haven, a place set apart, a 'walled garden' in Ruskin's phrase. Such a home was to be a safe defence against, as well as a necessary complement to, the rationalistic, abstract and impersonal marketplace. Domesticity was therefore defined in terms of its antithesis to the market – its necessary 'other'. Within it, organic relationships could flourish in tranquillity; everyone knew his or her place and was contented with it.

Domestic order, in contrast with the market, was founded on a chain of dependencies: the dependent relationships of wives to husbands, children to parents, and servants to masters, provided reassurance and order in a world where the traditional relations of paternalism and deference were being eroded by the fluidity of market relations in general and wage labour in particular. Family prayer, a practice derived from 17th century Puritanism, was revived by Evangelicals, both Anglican and Nonconformist. When the master read from the family bible in front of him, wife at his side, children in order of age, servants in order of rank, the *organic* nature of the household was ritually enacted. Within the separate kingdom, hierarchy was maintained and reaffirmed – bound together by familial bonds, communal beliefs and submission to a higher authority. It is this familial model which Mrs Thatcher evokes, a part of the formation of bourgeois society. Indeed, the family is that society's cell form, constructed on a very specific type of family authority and sexual division of labour.

The Evangelical stress on the importance of the family was hardly surprising in a society where it was still the basic economic unit. Most enterprises, whether in manufacturing, commerce or the professions, artisans or farmers, relied on family labour, family capital, and family connections. Partnership, which was the basis of larger businesses in a period before the development of companies, was most commonly between kin or family friends, often belonging to the same religious community. This element of trust was vital at a time before the development of commercial and financial institutions like banks.

Increased prosperity among the middle class, the drive to create a distinctive cultural and social space, combined with new familial ideals meant that the 18th century informal partnership of husband and wife was gradually replaced by a view which stressed the responsibility of the father as the provider while women and children were the dependants. The ability to support this household became built in to the definition of masculinity: being supported became a hallmark of female gentility, the definition of a *lady*.

In reality many middle-class men continued to rely on their wives' labour as well as their capital, at a time when the physical separation between work and home was still the exception. Nevertheless the direct part which women were able to play in the family enterprise was increasingly circumscribed. The range of 'suitable' occupations for middle-class women in the outside labour market narrowed. By mid-century more of these women were defined as 'surplus' since they could not marry, when marriage was increasingly the only 'trade' they could enter. As Rev John Angell James, a celebrated nonconformist divine, proclaimed, 'To be a good wife is a high attainment in female excellance: it is woman's brightest glory since the fall.' The impossibility of that 'bright glory' for large numbers of Victorian middle-class spinsters or widows, who were left without support in a society which then castigated them for working for anything other than love, exposed one of the cruellest contradictions of the so-called Victorian 'happy' family.

So integral were servants to the notion of family that the Registrar General, himself an Evangelical, wrote in his report on the 1851 Census: 'The English family in its essential type is composed of husband, wife, children and servants . . . ' The control of such servants, usually female and thus doubly dependent, confirmed the powerful position of the male head. In 1881 one in three girls between the ages of 15 and 20 was a servant and over one and a quarter million women and girls were in residential service. Employers of domestic servants argued both

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FWA

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that their own behaviour in front of the girls was a model for the working class and that they were training them for their futures as wives and mothers. Both claims are doubtful. Domestic servants changed jobs frequently, partly to resist personal domination, the very quality so prized within the patriarchal ideal. The old family retainer pensioned off in a cottage or wisely ruling the family as the ex-nanny of Brideshead is little more than a soothing fiction. Statistically by far the most common fate of the elderly ex-servant was the workhouse.

TRAINING their servants into domesticity was only one of the ways the middle class were concerned with constructing new patriarchal forms. Paternalist employers such as the Cadburys in Birmingham felt that their factories should be a school of morality and industry. In mid-century such employers still used married women providing they were of 'good moral character'. But by the end of the 19th century few married women worked for such a firm on the grounds that it was bad for their husbands, homes and children. In any case the increasing equation of the ability of a man to support his wife with the definition of his 'manhood' was a potent form of labour discipline, if it could be made to stick.

Middle-class propagators of the domestic ideal were active on many other fronts: in the Sunday and day schools, philanthropic societies, in the search for rational and domesticated recreation, the organisation of the new sanitary and health boards, as factory inspectors, houses. By the 1850s, the notion of a much sharper division of the sexes became a part of common sense, reaching both up and down the social scale, inscribed not only in manuals and treatises on 'How To Behave', but in the cultural practices of the nation. A young Birmingham clerk, recently married, recorded in his diary the habit of daily family prayer. He sought the Lord's assistance in training his bride to be a proper wife:

> My beloved wife is all to me that I could require in most respects – in other respects, she is improving. Bless the Lord. This evening, I returned home, found my wife under the influence of a little temptation – rather dissatisfied and unhappy through having been alone all day. But I talked, we read and bowed at the Family Altar, the Lord broke her heart and humbled her before him so that we were greatly blessed.

Clearly, large sections of the Victorian working class were not religious: in reality, they could never dispense with the labour of wives and daughters. Nevertheless, the extent to which the domestic *ideal* had been institutionalised did have an impact, both on the actual forms of working class culture, and on the assumptions about the relations between the sexes. Trade unions, for example, were confirmed in their view that married women working for wages was not only a threat to the jobs of the men, but were also not 'respectable': an ideological imprint which has had disastrous effects in the labour movement to the present day.

The 'order' which family as ideal and reality imposed was not only public but also intimate. Combined with an intense religious commitment, it produced a particular attack on openness about the body, and sexuality. We have seen how the highest aim of the Home was to be a place of peace and security, a foretaste of The Eternal Home. Discussions of sexuality were therefore curtailed, home reading censored; the general sexual knowledge, which had been widely available in the 18th century, either disappeared or was driven underground. In particular middle-class women were kept in deep ignorance. All forms of contraception were bundled out of sight, and until at least the second half of the 19th century most women could expect to go through a dozen or so pregnancies – although they might rear only six children in the middle class, and fewer in the working class because of childhood mortality. Trollope's Mr and Mrs Quiverful, trying hard to maintain clerical gentility, with their brood of ever hungry and growing children, remind us of the consequences of the absence of contraception. New, strict rules governing pre-marital sex were enforced and, more than at any time, women's status was defined by their sexual behaviour.

Such sexual repression was only enforced within familial culture. Outside it, prostitution, for example, was widespread: not surprisingly, as opportunities for economic support for women declined. For a variety of reasons, working class as well as middle class men were clients: and domestic servants were the largest pool for the recruitment to casual prostitution – in addition to being available for casual seduction within the household as an extension of their subordination to male authority within the family.

Men who aimed at respectability were constantly urged to control their sexual impulses: at the same time, they learned they must prove their virility through sexual adventures and conquests. This left its residue in the burden of guilt. The institutionalisation of this double standard has left its mark on sexual class cultures ever since. The intense involvement of brothers and sisters, and between fathers and their unmarried daughters living at home created an underlying preoccupation with incest in the middle classes. The fact that, after the mid-century, young men were kept at school and denied economic independence for longer periods, only compounded these sexual preoccupations, leading to the creation of the category, 'homosexual', and its accompanying guilt.

The concept of man as household head also had important political effects. The struggle for inclusion in the political process – both the vote and eligibility for office – was partly founded on the claims to, and definitions of, 'manhood'. The legal, economic and customary dependence of women (and servants) excluded them from the rights and responsibilities of both justice and citizenship. For example, it took a series of public interventions to prevent servants from being legally beaten or for married women to gain the right to their own earned income. The feminist movement at the close of Victoria's reign, widened this effort for change as the contradictions became more and more obvious and difficult to contain.

In exhorting us to return to 'Victorian values', Mrs Thatcher is appealing to a myth, which – as myths often do – glosses over those contradictions and hides the costs of 19th century family life. Myths help us to believe the impossible. But it remains a stubborn fact of history that 'it is impossible to cross the same stream twice'. New family forms have emerged in the 20th century associated with such factors as the entry of married women into the labour force, the organised power of the women's movement, the fall in the birthrate and the increase in life expectancy. In the early 19th century the population was dominated by the young and the control of adolescents was an even more serious matter than it is today. Now it is the proportion of the population over 75 which is growing most rapidly and whose dependence is predominantly a family affair.

It is hardly surprising that Mrs Thatcher's 'Victorian Values' stress the family, for in emphasising the social and the domestic she counterposes the family to the free market and the liberal conservative version of political economy to which she urges us to return. But Mrs Thatcher's Victorian family is the middle-class model, with its actual domination and subordination conveniently hidden. Her myth has been selectively reconstructed and echoes what was a myth in its own time. Let us remember that men's actions in pursuit of profit and power cannot be said to have made for particularly Happy Homes, much less a Good Society. □

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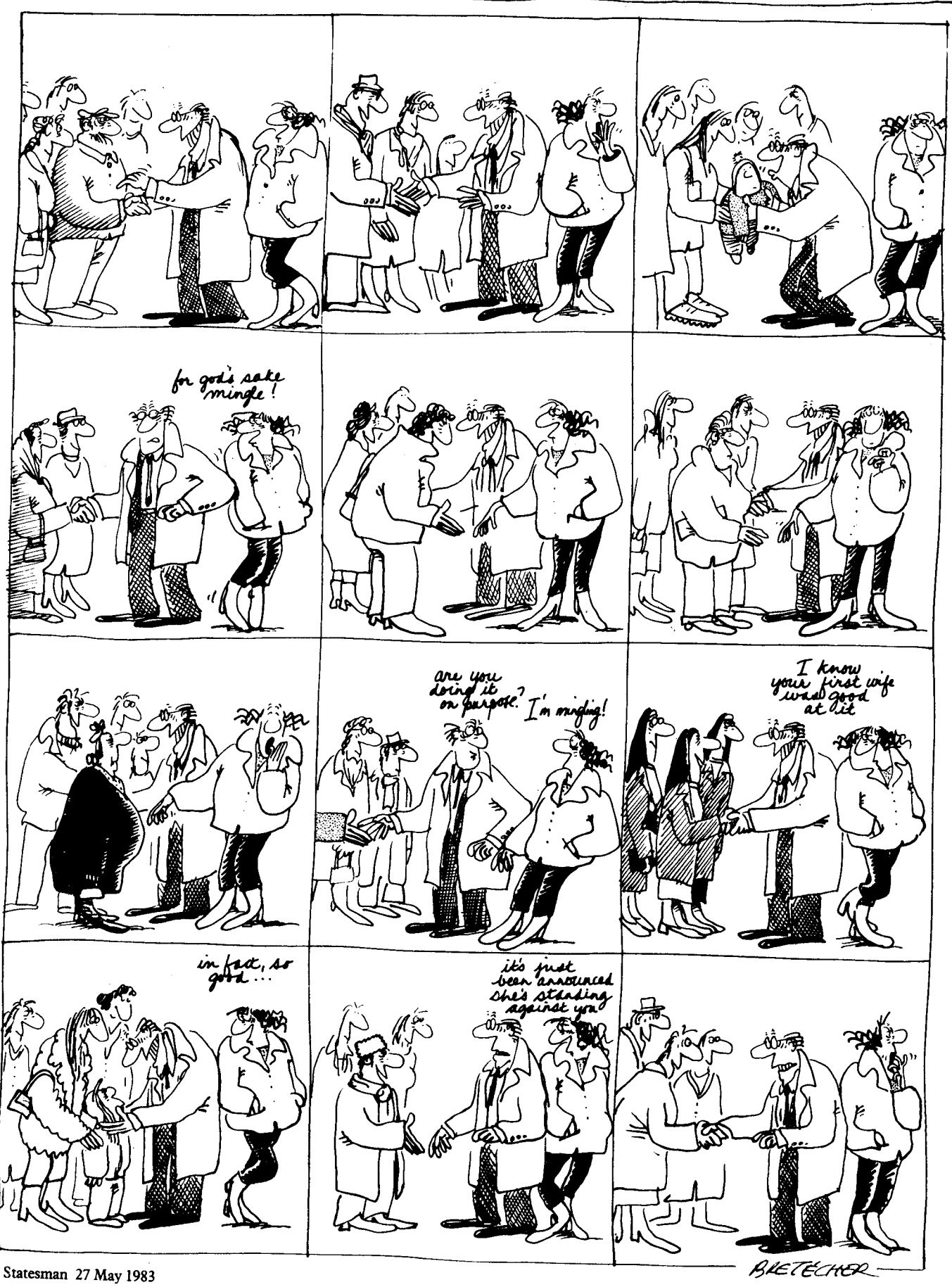
WALKABOUT


for god's sake mingle!
are you doing it on purpose?
I'm mingling!
I know your first wife was good at it
in fact, so good...
it's just been announced she's standing against you
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LETTERS

A national obsession?

D. E. Hookes, Coventry SW Constituency Labour Party

Your editorial of 20 May correctly, in my opinion, states that Mr Dalyell's charge – that Mrs Thatcher sank the *Belgrano* to prevent a diplomatic settlement of the Falklands dispute and thus save her political hide – is both specific and appalling. You are also right to point out that the circumstantial evidence points strongly to the correctness of this charge. However, your confidence in yet another official inquiry seems misplaced. Such bodies do not have a good track-record for the fearless pursuit of unpalatable truths about the activities of our rulers, as the Franks Committee report demonstrated. In any case they can always be given restricted terms of reference.

Your editorial did not, surprisingly, mention the currently most puzzling aspect of this matter – the silence of the national leadership of the Labour Party. We rank-and-file Labour Party members are at present wearing out shoe-leather attempting to combat the Falklands Spirit and/or Factor on the electoral doorstep by raising, among other things, the same questions as Tam Dalyell. And unless the *Belgrano* sinking is raised nationally by the Labour Party leadership the whole matter will be attributed to the obsessive ravings of an eccentric, maverick MP.

Those marbles

Richard Pankhurst, London NW3

In his admirable article 'Whose marbles?' (*NS* 20 May) Jules Lubbock quotes evidence to show that the British Museum's representative, Richard Holmes, 'outdid all' in purchasing loot seized in 1868 at the then Ethiopian capital, Magdala, thus making the museum, in effect, the receiver of stolen goods.

It may be recalled that Holmes, who entered Emperor Theodore's citadel within ten minutes of its capture by British troops, also acquired an important icon, the *Kwer'ata Re'esu*, which the Ethiopian army had for centuries carried to battle. Theodore's successor, Emperor John, wrote to the British government in 1872 to request restitution of this painting, as well as of a particularly valuable manuscript. The latter was duly returned by the British Museum – thus setting a precedent for restitution, but of the painting Queen Victoria wrote back to John, on 18 December, that 'no trace whatever' could be found, and she did 'not think it could have been brought to England'. Holmes, who had by then become Her Majesty's Librarian at Windsor Castle, did not disclose that the icon was in his personal possession until 1890, the year after Emperor John's death. The picture was subsequently sold by Holmes's widow. Its whereabouts, like that of some other loot from Magdala, is at present unknown.

It is in this historical context that the question of restitution should be considered.

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Union mergers

Aidan White, Chair NUJ AWP 1982-83; Simon Collings NUJ NEC, AWP member; Jake Ecclestone, Deputy General Secretary, AWP member; Barbara Gunnell, AWP; Kate Holman, NUJ Equality Working Party, AWP; Annie Pike, AWP

Francis Beckett's potted guide to 'Merger Mania' (*NS* 6 May) is seriously at fault when dealing with his own union, the National Union of Journalists.

Your readers should first understand that Mr Beckett has his own crude political axe to grind. Last year when a member of the NUJ executive council he played a leading role in unsuccessful efforts to sack the NUJ's negotiators, drawn from a conference-elected Amalgamation Working Party. This may explain his dismissive references to the working party's work, but it cannot excuse his inaccurate explanation as to why talks between the NUJ and the NGA broke down.

The facts are these. Talks between the two unions broke down on 5 November last year. The NGA told the NUJ that the position then reached should be put to a ballot of NUJ members. In December there was a move at the NUJ NEC to dismiss the union's negotiators. This was defeated. In January the NGA announced – for the first time – that they would only talk to the NUJ executive council. They didn't agree with the degree of influence the NUJ annual conference held over the talks.

To suggest, as Mr Beckett does, that the reason the NGA called off talks was the issue of women's representation in a new union is nonsense and reflects his own groundless prejudice. The role of women in a merged union was just one of many issues dealt with by the negotiators and, in fact, a higher level of agreement was reached here than in many other areas. The NUJ proposals drawn up after discussion throughout the union were in line with the TUC's Charter for Equality for Women in Trade Unions. This aim was endorsed by the NGA. It was made clear from the outset that we proposed the continuation of some very successful measures already adopted by the NUJ – such as the mandatory appointment of equality officers – and the introduction of others.

A miner's life

John Cunningham, Sheffield

As a miner I feel I must take issue with the letter from Mr G. Kirk, Director of Public Relations, NCB (*NS* 20 May). I haven't read Douglass and Krieger's book *A Miner's Life* so I will make no comment on it. What does need comment, however, is Mr Kirk's smugness about safety in the mining industry today.

He states that there were 44 fatalities last year, but this figure actually hides more than it reveals. It ignores, for instance, the number of men who die every year as a result of pneumoconiosis. According to Kinnersly's *Hazards of Work*: 'More than 700 *new* cases are diagnosed by the Pneumoconiosis Medical Panel every year'. And each year doctors write 'fibrosis of the lung' on the death certificates of more than 1,000 miners. These men have been killed by the pit but do not count in the NCB's statistics, which present a false picture.

Mr Kirk talks glibly of 'joint and determined action by management and unions' on safety. The truth is that the 'determined action' has nearly always been from the union side and management have consistently dragged their feet. Take, for example, the near disaster at Cardowan Colliery, Scotland, when a fire broke out and a number of men were badly burnt – which could have been avoided. All that was needed was the location of automatic gas sensors at strategic points in the pit. The NCB has had the technical know-how to be able to do this for some years, but it is only recently that Environmental Monitoring Systems (EMS) have started to be installed. The same system has been operating in French mines for several years.

One final point. A friend of mine, a local journalist wishing to compile a documentary about the mining industry, phoned the Press Officer of the Yorkshire Area NCB asking if she could visit a mine near Sheffield. This particular mine is not exactly a 'showcase' but I should imagine it is fairly typical of many mines up and down the country. To say that she was given a curt 'No' is to put it mildly. Is it the case, Mr Kirk, that the NCB, as your letter seems to indicate, doesn't want its self-professed image of push-button automation dented by outsiders (or insiders like Dave Douglass?) seeing the truth for themselves?

Only joking

Mark Benney, London N8

In the penultimate paragraph of my review of 'Rebel Advocate' (*NS* 20 May) I refer to the formation of the Society of Labour Lawyers. It is not accurate to say that the Haldane Society had become 'hopelessly infiltrated by Communists'. This was intended as an ironic reference to the gloss put on those events by Muriel Box on page 68 of her book.

END

Several readers have drawn attention to an unintended ambiguity in Duncan Campbell's report (*NS* 20 May) on the END Berlin convention. The article did not mean to suggest that there was any rift between CND and END, or between Mr Ken Coates of the Russell Foundation and the Foundation itself.

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Bernard Crick

The troublemaker

A Personal History
A. J. P. TAYLOR *Hamish Hamilton* £9.95

I USED to live in a flat in a converted Edwardian house on Kingston Hill. A very old man, a society doctor long retired (except that he once sallied out in a hired Bentley to sign the Grand Duchess Tania's death certificate at Hampton Court), would come up smiling to talk to me in the garden. 'Do you know, Crick, what L. G. said to me the night before he died?' 'No, Dr Nicoll', I would always bellow back. 'He said, he did, "keep me alive another night Nicholl, just to annoy my enemies".'

At 77 may one wish Alan Taylor a thousand and one more nights (especially as he has recently married again, and happily, he says) to annoy his enemies. As was said of President Grover Cleveland, 'we love him for the enemies he has made' – so it is a good job he has made so many (writing as one does in the middle of Cambridge History Year, indeed of Trevor-Roper Week itself), for there are some things in him which otherwise are not specially loveable. And doubtless he will make more enemies yet and not merely with this book, although he had not foreseen clearly enough, he tells us, one problem of autobiography, libel. He lets drop (or rather chucks straight at us) that the publisher's legal adviser found 76 cases of potential libel. Nonetheless, I still advise several people to read it closely, though I wish them no luck in their actions. I urge the publishers to hang on to the original typescript by hook or by crook, not to let the last copy fall into the clutches of either heirs or educational institutions. Their attitudes might not be 100 per cent preservationist.

Taylor tells us that *The Troublemakers* was his favourite book. He had been asked to give the Ford Lectures in English history, but suddenly realised that he had never done any English history – *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe 1848-1918, The Hapsburg Empire, Bismarck* and the ever popular, contentious *The Origins of the Second World War* just ahead, but not then *Beaverbrook* or, for the Oxford History of England (perhaps the boldest commission from a university press), *English History, 1914-45*. 'I wandered out into the night, encountered Alan Bullock and told him of my plight.' Bullock suggested, since Taylor had always opposed official British foreign policy, why didn't he do a study of those radicals who had opposed it in the past?

It is possibly his best book, too; certainly history as most people want to read it. Pungent, lively, ironic, stimulating, a clear tale well told and exhibiting a thorough mastery of the existing sources – though a very small pedantic voice whispers in my ear, 'Masterly, indeed, Master's degree stuff, nothing original in the use of sources or in method that would earn a Ph.D. rather than an academic bestseller'. Perhaps he could have made the same ghastly mistake as his old enemy, Trevor-Roper; for, politics apart, both are fond of a good tale more than of technical history, both fully trust their own English 'good judgment'.

There is, of course, a deep point, not a casual joke, in his claiming that his favourite book got written by accident. Everything

happens by accident. The First and Second World Wars occurred by accident. Neither Hitler nor Chamberlain had any grand design, be it world domination or appeasement; they simply staggered from crisis to crisis. Certainly one cannot write true history as the unfolding of ideological intentions. And at the time he wrote, Taylor may have restored a balance. There was more of luck and the banana skin both to the rise of the Nazis and to the outbreak of war than many had suggested – how he hates pompous historical hindsight posing as theory! But how he hates theory of any kind. He says that in his *The Struggle for Mastery* 'there is little about "the profound forces" that were then becoming fashionable'. But, siding always with the practical men, he does seem blind to how much their perceptions of what is practice and of what is practicable are conditioned by general concepts. Right to attack notions of being *caused* by 'profound forces', he throws out even *conditioned* by.

Perhaps it is accidental that he happened to grow up in Manchester with a Quaker background, happened to write for the *Guardian*, happened to write for popular newspapers and happened then to be taken up as the aggressive radical voice in the first post-war unscripted television debates on current affairs. He is terribly proud of all that. He confesses to having 'lost faith in Socialism after the experience of the Attlee Labour Government', but he never really convinces, or tries to, that he ever was a socialist rather than Manchester radical turned media-don Prince of Troublemakers. His realism at times seems morally obtuse. He had 'no illusions' about Stalinism, but 'accepted the Five Year Plan as . . . socialism in action which I still think it was'. He believed that the Communist postwar 'victories' in Eastern Europe 'would be an improvement on the existing regimes as in my opinion they have proved to be'. Fair enough, if you accept that history can be nothing else than it was. Were there no alternatives? And, if not, why does he continue to kick against the pricks and revive so vividly old quarrels?

There are a lot of anecdotes about his lecturing prowess. He boasts that even before the war in Manchester he abandoned lecture notes, and gave the Ford lectures extempore to ever-growing crowds. It could work brilliantly, but what an absurd principle. I heard him still in his prime give a public address in a crowded Sheffield City Hall, but the audience got restive and irritated at the tired and familiar material that poured out notelessly.

The time for celebration will be when he has gone. He still has the power to hold and annoy, to annoy and to hold. Great popular history is what holds a culture together and it is far more decent in his sceptical, radical voice than in the celebratory incantations of the old High Tory historians or the obsessive domestic crochet-work of the new mindless cabinet formation school. It was a great disgrace to Oxford that they never honoured him with a chair, and painful to see that the malice of second- and third-rate men still pains him. But his honours are listed here opposite the title-page in the 26 names of his previous books. □

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Essays on Fiction
FRANK KERMODE *Routledge* £9.95 & £5.95

E. M. Forster, one of the writers discussed by Professor Kermode, had a character in *The Longest Journey* complain that 'Uncle Willie floundered hopelessly' when confronted with the innovative literature of the early 20th century. Uncle Willie belonged to the same family as Rattigan's Aunt Edna – people who, although not stupid (otherwise they wouldn't be trying), are baffled by unfamiliar techniques. Given time to adjust, however, such readers do assimilate change surprisingly well; Uncle Willie's grandchildren have come to relish what would once have seemed the impossible complexities of John Fowles, Günter Grass abd Gabriel García Marquez.

There are, indeed, new ways of reading, and these have been given a theoretical basis in the systems of structuralism and deconstruction. Largely because of their French origin, and also because of an alarming proliferation of strange critical terms, these disciplines have made slow headway in Britain. Some readers think that they've got the hang of it and then find that they aren't saussure; others still know foucault about it. Anyone wishing to find his way in this territory couldn't do better than to take Kermode as a guide – or, in his own self-description, a mediator. His Chapter 4, in particular, is an admirably lucid introduction for beginners. (These essays are in fact lectures given at various times between 1971 and 1982, so that some deal with more advanced parts of the syllabus than others.)

The key to the new mode of understanding is the idea that the reader 'makes' a novel – that is, makes it into what it means for him. '*Seul le lectuer parle*', Barthes announced (though Kermode thinks that '*seul*' is a bit strong). Since we have accepted for a long time that a Shakespeare play can be variously interpreted by each director and each audience, it's illogical to cling to the notion that there can be a single 'correct' interpretation of a novel. The question is bedevilled, however, by somewhat sterile arguments about the weight to be given to the writer's intention. An American critic called P. D. Juhl, whose controversy with Kermode is reprinted in this book, states flatly that this intention must be granted complete authority. At the other extreme, French theorists dismiss it as wholly irrelevant. Only the text counts, to be studied as one would study an African bronze by an anonymous sculptor.

Writers, while naturally miffed when told that their intentions are of no account, are mostly prepared nowadays to agree that their conscious purpose is only one factor in the end-product. It's a familiar experience for a writer to find that he's said something which he didn't set out to say, and indeed to become aware of this only when someone else points it out.

Kermode quotes in this context a remarkable letter by Melville, who had only a vague idea, it seems, that *Moby Dick* was 'susceptible of an allegoric construction' and was glad to have the allegories 'revealed to me'. With an innocence that modern students would find laughable, he thought he was writing about whales.

As Kermode tells us, a time came when this innocence was discarded by writers (in advance of the critics, let it be noted). James, soon followed by Conrad, Ford and Forster, recognised and wished readers to recognise that a novel secures its effect through a lattice-work of codes, and that the strictly informative codes evident to Uncle Willie weren't always the most important. Although this has seldom been so persuasively explained as in Kermode's commentaries, it is of course a general assumption of modern scholarship. However, it's also true that both James and Conrad introduced their novels with prefaces, telling the reader in plain terms when and how the idea had germinated, how the characters were conceived, and – it does boil down to this – what was the intention. More than earlier writers, they worried about the reader missing the point. Their texts may have had involuntary as well as conscious components, but they were far from accepting the concept of a text as a phenomenon to be viewed in separation from its origins.

THE MORAL concerns of these writers are also highly relevant, as I imagine that Kermode would agree although it's not a theme of these essays. Morality is popularly supposed to be a Victorian obsession, but some major Victorian novelists – Thackeray, Trollope, sometimes George Eliot – inclined to a morally neutral stance, saying to the reader: 'This is how fallible human beings behave, and I invite you to understand rather than to judge.' As against this, in such post-Victorian novels as *Lord Jim*, *Victory*, *Some Do Not* and *Howards End*, the author's view of right conduct and wrong conduct is both explicit and emotionally charged.

One can, in fact, explain this apparent paradox by saying that the evolution of a humanist, non-theological morality was much in the minds of the novelists of the period, as of the philosophers who were their friends. But it is, surely, an important strand in the texture of the novels that they produced.

Even so, it remains true that much is left to the reader, and I'm grateful to Professor Kermode for assuring me, in his discussion of *What Maisie Knew*, that we never find out exactly what Maisie did know. I always thought I was missing the point. □

FEMINISM
Sara Maitland

Fear and fury

What is to be Done about Violence Against Women?
ELIZABETH WILSON *Penguin* £2.50

While I was reading *What is to be Done about Violence Against Women?* (a laborious title – but explicable as an indication that this is one of a series of Penguin specials which will deal with 'the central social and political issues of the day'), I had a rather odd experience: almost every man who saw what I was reading felt impelled to comment on it. A policeman on the late train from Oxford to Paddington, who was meant to be preventing soccer hooliganism, engaged me for nearly half-an-hour explaining why it was not the fault of the police that so few wife-batterers were brought to book and arguing that the changes in the law designed to help such women actually only inflamed men to more violence. One of the soccer supporters on the same train delayed his energetic passage to ask if I was a feminist, reading that sort of thing. Why did he want to know? Because he'd never seen one before. A man on the tube the next day leaned over to say he betted the book did not mention that it was women not men who battered babies.

All these comments were unsolicited and definitely defensive. They were fuelled by an impulse strong enough to persuade a good half-dozen members of the British Travelling Public to break the ritual of silence. None of them connected their demands that I talk to them with violence. The cover of the book, on which all these remarks were based, does not say that the subject is men's violence against women, but every commentator assumed (rightly) that this was the case. And each one seemed to feel that the book itself was somehow 'unfair'.

Well, women too feel that it is 'unfair'; not unfair that men are so accused, but unfair not only that we have to experience daily the reality of violence or threat of violence, that our lives are circumscribed by this fear and that some fundamental 'freedoms' which democracy is supposed to offer its citizens are curtailed in our case, but that moreover – and just as importantly – most popular analyses of this fact either don't take it very seriously ('What about battered men, then?') or blame the victim ('She must have asked for it'). Often this sense of unfairness and the anger that it generates seem to give rise only to mounting impotence and self-perpetuating confusion. I believe that anger is the right response; that it is a healthy reaction to the mental, physical and ideological battering we experience, and that any woman who does not feel any anger at all is repressing something dangerously. None-

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theless, feminism has rightly insisted that we must use the energy of anger to go beyond outrage towards political analysis and action.

Elizabeth Wilson, well known as a socialist feminist, has made here a genuinely helpful contribution to this debate within the women's movement. She has also made it in a tone, context and language which invite a greater participation from people who would not see themselves as a part of that movement. Although the specific areas of violence she chooses to deal with – rape, domestic violence, prostitution, incest and pornography – are not exhaustive (the experience of non-voluntary sterilisation or even the 'treatment' dished out in some labour wards, for example, are not included), they are usefully broad.

Her thesis challenges both the establishment theory that violence is a psychological aberration deserving sympathy and individual therapy, and the claim that 'male nature' is ontologically violent and women-hating, which is rather oddly shared by radical feminists and liberal male behaviourists. She argues instead that gender is a social construct, and therefore changeable and – crucially – therefore an area requiring political action, both at the ideological and the immediate practical levels. Our present ideological concept of gender, and hence of the family, of heterosexuality and psychological 'normality', and of the role of social policy all make violence against women a structural inevitability. Because these structures are well below the point of conscious manipulation they are extremely hard to challenge and change. A few new laws, or rephrasings or codes of practice, will not alter this much, although they may, and must, improve the lot of victims, reflect social judgments and raise consciousness.

Wilson tackles this whole emotive area with considerable sensitivity. She wraps her reports of the abuse of women in a historical and philosophical context. She holds out hope of change by looking in some detail at what the women's movement has achieved in the last 12 or so years, and points out ways in which men can be involved in the changes she thinks are needed. She is clear that she is preparing a political agenda not defining a new morality. Nor does she use statistics to blunt the edge of her own anger, which animates the book without overwhelming her clarity. The indictment however is clear; 'normal' men are guilty daily of violence against women in our society. It is hard to feel the patience and concern and sincerity and open-ness that her programme requires; particularly when there seems to be no sign whatever of 'repentance' by these men. It is exhausting and debilitating that social problems that focus on gender are perceived as 'women's problems' still. *What is to be Done about Violence Against Women?* ought to be an antidote to despair, but, as Wilson points out in the book, 'research' often means not doing anything practical about a problem. The sane and kindly part of me hopes against hope that more women feel like Elizabeth Wilson than feel the destructive fury that I do, as I read her book. □

POLITICS
Malcolm Imrie

First flowers

Anti-Nuclear Protest: The Opposition to Nuclear Energy in France
ALAIN TOURAINE, ZSUZSA HEGEDUS, FRANCOIS DUBET & MICHEL WIEVIORKA *Cambridge*
£19.50

'Today the political arena is covering over with new flora; later will come new gardeners . . .' Alain Touraine and his research team's continuing studies of 'new social movements' are themselves among the new flora he celebrates in this uncharacteristically lyrical passage. This book is the latest product of a radical sociology whose premises were convincingly elaborated in *The Voice and the Eye* (1978). But for British readers it's equally significant as another addition to a growing number of European interpretations of post-industrial politics that are at long last reaching us in translation.

As the old labour movement declines, it isn't just political struggles that are hesitant and disparate: the theories that blossom from them can be just as 'wild and unruly'. The variety isn't surprising. Writers as far apart as Gorz and Negri would share with Touraine at least this recognition: that we're in a period of change as profound and painful as that which gave birth to the working-class movement. If, as Touraine believes, a new social movement can take its place, we should remember how long it took the working class to find its own identity, its own, autonomous, means of expression. As a sociologist, his role, he claims, is to observe its gestation, and help it along.

Since 1968, he has 'intervened' in a number of areas: student campaigns, the women's movement, the Occitain separatists. But the French anti-nuclear energy movement was potentially the most fruitful, having a direct continuity with '68 and, unlike its British or US equivalents, a marked political orientation. It could fit his classic definition of a social movement, with participants able to identify themselves, their adversaries and, above all, the 'stake' of their actions, their alternative vision of development.

Between 1975 – after the French Electricity Generating Board (EDF) announced a huge increase in its nuclear programme – and 1978 the movement was certainly a powerful force. It established active, if fragile, links between farmers, ecologists, scientists, far left militants and trade unionists of the relatively progressive Confederation Française et Démocratique du Travail (CFDT). It could mobilise tens of thousands for the often violent defence of sites in Brittany, Alsace or the Isère.

Touraine's hypothesis was that it *contained* a social movement which his intervention aimed to draw out through a series of lengthy meetings with representative groups of militants based in Paris and Grenoble-Malville.

His team, working as 'interpreters' and 'agitators' led the groups towards this 'conversion' – by a process akin to a sympathetic, collective psychoanalysis they were to make participants aware of their conflicts, blockages and possibilities. How well could they define themselves against opponents like the EDF, the Atomic Energy Commission, or pro-nuclear Communist Party officials? How would they resolve their own weaknesses (a generalised anti-Statism, a purely negative protest, a 'utopian withdrawal into the warmth of community experience')?

The technique was neither as manipulative nor as dry as Touraine's terminology might suggest. The intervention – described in the book in great detail – lasted over a year, and was extremely productive. Although the research ended when the movement was in disarray following the death of a demonstrator in a battle with the police at Malville and the setback of the '78 elections, Touraine's conclusions are positive. The work of the groups had *prophesied* the existence of a social movement, though they were not yet part of it.

Touraine's strength is his constant affirmation that history has no logic beyond that imposed by the actors of these new movements – there is nowhere else to look. But the richness of *Anti-Nuclear Protest* comes from the actors themselves. Filling the spaces on his graphs between the 'defensive action' and the 'counter-project' is a lucid, self-critical group of men and women whose insights and uncertainties tell us as much about a possible future politics as they do about the opposition to nuclear energy. That they stayed together throughout this demanding project is the best validation of the researchers' methodology: *why* they stayed together is the best justification for Touraine's optimism. □

BENJAMIN and SARAH DISRAELI

A Year at Hartlebury or The Election

MICHAEL FOOT: 'The volume is quite fit to take its place in the true Disraeli canon and contains many gems which add fresh gleams to the portrait of Disraeli himself . . . To read the book is to be convinced as well as enraptured.' £8.50

JOHN MURRAY

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CHINA
Delia Davin

Jade curtain

China: Alive in the Bitter Sea
FOX BUTTERFIELD *Hodder* £9.95

Western views of China tend to be extreme and subject to violent reversals. The red hell image purveyed by the American press during the Cold War gave way to a naive and idealised picture, popular with the Left during the Vietnam War but more generally accepted in its aftermath, of a land in which materialism and selfishness were being overcome. Since the death of Mao in 1976, revelations about the less presentable side of China have produced disillusion in the West. *Alive in the Bitter Sea* is a reflection of that disillusion and will no doubt contribute to it.

Fox Butterfield was trained in Chinese studies at Harvard and did post-graduate work on Taiwan. Subsequently he was a foreign correspondent in Vietnam, Japan and Hong Kong before opening the *New York Times* office in Peking in 1979. His book therefore, although basically an account of what he saw and heard in his 20 months in China, is given depth and strength by a knowledge of the language, history and politics of the country.

He has produced a profoundly pessimistic study of China today as a society in which bureaucracy, self-interest, privilege and incompetence flourish, and where even former political activists are now disillusioned, motivated only by the desire to survive and do their best for their families. Ironically, as he also shows, the attitude of many Chinese intellectuals to the United States has also come full circle, the imperialist aggressor of the 1950s and 1960s having now become the Mecca where everyone wishes to study or to send their children to study.

The official Chinese line is now that the communist revolution enjoyed real success in the 1950s, the Party was able to inspire and use a great deal of enthusiasm and dedication, the economy recovered and grew and living standards improved for nearly everyone. However, this steady progress was interrupted and even reversed first by the Great Leap Forward of 1958 and then by the Cultural Revolution from 1966 onwards. Meanwhile uncontrolled population growth aggravated general economic problems and almost cancelled out gains in grain production.

Some of Butterfield's informants believe that China, though she has suffered a couple of serious derailments, is basically on the right track; for others, however, faith once lost cannot be restored. Again and again he recounts the stories of friends and acquaintances whose confidence in the Party and China's future had been complete until personal disaster during the Cultural Revolution forced them to rethink their whole position. Dispossessed and disillusioned, they were disposed to be more critical of the Party's performance, past and future.

Some of these life-histories will stay in my mind a long time. Take the extraordinarily courageous girl whose scientist father's political connections brought the Red Guards to their home when she was six. Their possessions were burnt, the family was exiled to the countryside to live in extreme poverty, both parents were beaten. The mother died and six-year-old Lihua somehow grew up to be the mainstay of the family. When Butterfield met her she had returned to Peking after 13 years and was struggling against great bureaucratic obstruction to reunite her family there.

Other stories concern the unhappiness of individuals, most often women, who are constrained by the extremely puritan ethic of contemporary society. For some, misery arises from sexual ignorance; others are trapped in unhappy marriages because divorce is frowned on; and yet others are punished for extra-marital or pre-marital sex.

The attention given to sex and sexual matters in Butterfield's book is one of its distinctive features. Despite widespread public discussion of reproduction and contraception in China today, sex and sexuality are still regarded as very private matters, difficult to broach in conversation. Intellectuals, however, have a vague, often rather exaggered notion that a 'sexual revolution' has taken place in the West, so foreigners with a reasonably sympathetic manner may attract confidences from those with sexual problems they are anxious to discuss. The foreigner not only provides a sympathetic ear, but is also the classic outsider, here today but conveniently gone tomorrow.

The decision on how to treat such confidences is a grave one. The authorities tend to regard it as unpatriotic if not downright traitorous for a Chinese to confide such problems to a foreigner. The dearth of published information on sexual life in China is thus due not only to Chinese reluctance to discuss it, but also to the wish of foreigners to protect Chinese friends and respect their privacy. Although Butterfield has made efforts to camouflage the identities of his informants, it is impossible to escape the feeling that he has been reckless with information which may compromise them.

What of the overall negativism of this book? Generalisations about a country the size of China are hard to make and, not surprisingly, visiting foreigners emerge with widely differing impressions. A foreign correspondent's life in Peking is not such as to make him likely to see the place in a positive light. He is the helpless victim of much bureaucracy. China is so security-conscious that, for example, the maid of a friend of mine was instructed by the police not to tell her foreign employer of the theft of some of her clothes from the line as it would reflect badly on China. There is a widespread reluctance to admit to a foreigner that anything can go wrong. Ironically this means that a foreign correspondent's stories tend to be drawn disproportionately from the cynical, the bitter and the despairing, because they alone will talk frankly to him. The authenticity of these voices cannot be denied, but their representativeness is open to question.

China is a poor country where life by the standards of the advanced world is still shockingly difficult. Butterfield's reaction to rationing in Peking may amuse those of us who still remember a not dissimilar system in Britain, but it also points up a serious problem in writing about the Third World. Justifiable criticism all too easily spills over into blaming a country for poverty and its side-effects. Of course some Chinese, though by no means all, would like to leave for a better life elsewhere. The same is true of any poor country. Nor should we fool ourselves that the main obstacle is China's closed door. We in the West have shown little welcome to political refugees from Asia let alone those who simply seek to better themselves.

Butterfield has produced one of the best negative books on contemporary China, conveying its atmosphere vividly enough to fill me with nostalgia. But if things were as universally bad as he portrays them, China's admittedly creaking mechanism would surely have ground to a halt. He gives no voice to those, and they are numerous, who still have hope for the future. □

Stewart Conn

Turn of century

Sickert's Minnie Cunningham stands alone
In the gloom, at the Old Bedford,
From the tip of her wide-brimmed hat
To the frilled hem of her gown
Rich red; one fore-arm
Languidly showing; face tilted
To catch the light's sheen.

She glows, glamour of loneliness.
Is it wistfulness merely,
Regarding an audience who are there
Or who have deserted her?
In her solitariness, a fragility
Which, garbed in white,
Would draw a ghostliness about her.

What, almost a century ago,
Was to be her future?
Did she, like those back-cloth blooms
Left of frame, just fade away?
Is it their fragrance she inhales?
Explaining the slight pregnancy
Of posture, skittishness of pose?

So many questions, to which no answer.
Like the Music Hall itself, she is gone
Into darkness: chandeliers brought down,
Stucco reduced to powder.
The death of a theatre, a whole era.
And her still solitary there –
Girlish in red, with so sombre an air.

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FICTION
Harriett Gilbert

ET's

The Sentimental Agents in the Volyen Empire
DORIS LESSING *Cape* £7.95
The K-Factor
DAVID CAUTE *Michael Joseph* £8.95
On the Stroll
ALIX KATES SHULMAN *Virago* £8.95 & £3.95
White Horses
ALICE HOFFMAN *Collins* £7.95

Extraterrestrials aren't frightening. What truly terrifies us, it appears, is the thought that we may have invented them; that planet after planet will prove to be devoid of anything we recognise as life. Space fantasies that populate the cosmos with alien civilizations provide a comforting, quasi-religious mythology, of which a regular feature is 'Superior Intelligence' – some form of benign omnipotence that shoulders the responsibility for our actions.

The fifth novel in Doris Lessing's 'Canopus in Argos' series, **The Sentimental Agents in the Volyen Empire,** appears to have merely adopted this form as a framework for social satire – at its heart, however, it carries the same alluring, dangerous promise: that nothing we do is of ultimate, absolute importance.

In dispatches to Canopus, agent Klorathy reports on the course of an inter-planetary power struggle between the Volyen and Sirian empires. Both are in a state of collapse, but the Sirian empire has a special weapon – the Virtue – an ideology attributed to it and greatly admired by Volyen youth, which thus spends its time promoting a Sirian invasion. What *appears* to upset Klorathy is their rhetoric. Reporting back on one of his colleagues, Incent (who has fallen victim to the Volyen disease and decided to address a meeting of dissatisfied miners), Klorathy writes:

> 'It is quite evident', Incent was saying . . . 'that we are here at the fulcrum of a dynamic. What perspectives stretch before us as we stand with one foot in the shameful and turgid past and the other in a future where the forms of life will become ever more vibrant and luminous and where, grasping opportunities in hands that have lost timidity, we build happiness where nothing is now but sullen misery . . .' Calder's group began to emit angry noises, and Calder shouted, 'Come on, lad, let's hear your concrete proposals.' Incent, brought up short, stood smiling vaguely, his rhetoric jumping and jolting through him . . .

But beneath this useful attack on the abuse of words – on demagoguery, crowd manipulation and cynical political careerism – Klorathy whispers a more sinister message: that, since 'empires rise and fall, fall and rise', all human action is pointless.

Any validity the view may have is undermined by the book's concurrent implication that ideologies are all the same – communism equals fascism; politics are just another religion . . . Klorathy can be an attractive narrator, charming, witty and apparently compassionate; but satirists should perhaps not attempt to rectify the follies they expose. His vaunted 'superior' wisdom – his pure, disinterested logic – turns out to be even more absurd than the muddled passions he scorns.

David Caute's **The K-Factor** presents a society – Rhodesia, 1979 – not so much muddled as in a state of advanced and stinking decay. Enclosed behind anti-grenade screens and floodlit fences, armed with a pistol and a couple of Dobermann Pinschers, Sonia Laslet, the wife of a white coffee farmer, grimly sits out the war. Her husband visits his mistress in Salisbury, drinks, and oversees the torture of 'Afs' – who, if not 'terrs' themselves, are probably helping the terrorists out. The language of racial abuse grates the nerves at each page. From the moment when 'mission-school-educated' Hector Nyangagwa is admitted to the Laslet household ('I must warn you', Sonia informs him, 'my husband does still refer to Afs as nigs . . . He calls Afs he respects "white men". But he's never had one at his table. He says it would upset the servants . . .'), the atmosphere is choked with a ugliness. Even the neighbouring Catholic mission is polluted. Even the camps of the freedom fighters are soiled with grotesque brutality. The novel is certainly a stronger indictment of colonialism than *The Sentimental Agents in the Volyen Empire,* yet – despite some cliff-hanging tension and tantalising ambiguities – the stagnation drags all reaction, at last, to a standstill.

Although set in New York's Hell's Kitchen and possessing, as central characters, a 16-year-old hooker, a pimp and a bag lady, **On the Stroll** by Alix Kates Shulman is an optimistic and romantic novel. Robin Ward is the clear-eyed kid who, to escape her father, takes a Greyhound to the Big Apple and winds up selling her ass. Prince is the pimp who profits from it, and Owl is the old woman, dragging her life from doorstep to station waiting-room, who becomes convinced that Robin is her long-lost daughter. Prince, in fact, is a hopeless case – stumbling about in a suit of machismo, which (the only point in his favour) he never quite learns how to wear. But Robin and Owl develop an oblique relationship through which each finds her salvation. A quiet authority in characterisation restrains the novel from sliding into sentimentality.

It is gothic melodrama that threatens Alice Hoffman's **White Horses** – or would be, were the author not at ease in a world where incest, murderous passions, family feuds and death-like comas co-exist with baby-sitting, highschool and out-of-season trailer parks. This is the world of Teresa, brought up by her mother on tales of the 'Arias', a breed of wild and beautiful men who carry women away on their horses to new and exciting lives. The story of her painful awakening from this fantasy is told with such fierce integrity that its strangeness becomes the only possible reality. □

DANCE
Stephanie Jordan

Whirligig

Lois Greenfield

Laura Dean at Sadler's Wells

EVER SINCE the American post-modern dance movement began 20 years ago, pledged to oppose the narrative, high dynamics and high-mindedness of established modern dance, there has been a stream of performers developing their own work in a spirit of fierce individualism. To overcome the effect of decades of highly technical dance vocabulary, many dancers returned to basics, to 'minimal' movement; the outcome, a range of stylistic solutions that were determinedly diverse.

Laura Dean, at Sadler's Wells last week, is one such individualist. She started choreographing in the late sixties, walking and jumping in simple patterns and, most idiosyncratically of all, spinning. She has since added gestural and textural complexity, winning audiences and subsidy, and becoming what passes for New York establishment with two works for the Joffrey Ballet, the sort of integration of post-modern and classical dance that has no equivalent in this country. Her style incorporated certain ethnic traditions, particularly those mesmeric dances that induce trance or supposed deep awareness. ▷

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Judging from the three group pieces shown at the Wells, Dean's six dancers still spin a lot, either slowly or fast, in different rhythms, sometimes bent over, sometimes with arms raised and, in *Inner Circle*, with skirts or trousers ballooning out most effectively as they skim across the floor. There is also fast, folksy stepping and stamping, some leggy phrases, hints of mobile pelvis and shoulders. Dean composes her own music for various combinations of percussion, autoharps, synthesiser and bells. It pounds out the dancers' square rhythms, a fixed point against which they pitch their counter-patterns. Occasionally, it quietens or shuts off completely.

BUT THE most remarkable accompaniment is the dancers' own arms and hands. They pluck with them, scoop or swipe the air, spread them like a shower of sparks; they create the deliberate tension of drawing a bow, revving up with a fist or precisely miming an imaginary task. In the quiet *Enochian*, male then female soloist introduces hieroglyphic gestures from ancient scrolls.

Dean is influenced by the phase and repetition structures of composers like Steve Reich and Philip Glass. She is no phase composer herself, but plots her own group works in clear blocks, presenting a formation until you know it well. The simplest steps or long complex phrases might shift through the group, one dancer at a time, or in pairs, perhaps twice or three times through, perhaps in canon, in concentric circles, or a unison line-up surging back and forth, then transition, gear change and so to the next stage.

Certainly, you are initially amazed at the unusual dervishing and at the enthusiasm, sometimes toy-soldier, sometimes radiant, with which these performers fill these blocks of time, yet the routine of Dean's plan is the passage work that inevitably keeps the group marking time, fidgeting on the runway. Ultimately, there is no take-off, or it comes too late.

In *Sky Light*, the dancers suddenly whirl apart to crouch over slowly, humble in their solitary spotlights. As their hands reach out poignantly for the sky, the curtain descends. Dean knows how to deliver a stunning final line, but at this stage of the game it's a device-conscious throwback. *Dance* (1976), the oldest piece shown, imparts a welcome sense of communion and drive. Dean's work as a whole can contain the agony of ritual, the incense of its intriguing trappings and is fascinating as novelty. But, although I admire it, I remain an unbeliever.

Dean's *Sky Light* is to be set on **London Contemporary Dance Theatre** this summer, the most uncharacteristic work ever to enter its repertoire and, certainly, the sole evidence of American post-modern. She will create a new work for them too. Input of this kind suggests a startling change for a company whose image is luscious, earthy and lyrical, with streamlined physiques and, above all, individual personality.

Following Dean at the Wells, LCDT is currently intent on celebrating what it is accustomed to, after a triumphant New York debut and before the retirement of Robert Cohan, the company's director since its inception. Appropriately, the two-week season is dedicated principally to his work. The first night opened with the one London première, Siobhan Davies's *The Dancing Department*. It is arguably the most complicated piece that LCDT has ever performed, for Davies has accepted the challenge of Bach's *Musical Offering*, its canons, cancrizans and fugue, the meaning of the opening *ricercar* her starting point. Researching a theme until it takes flight is, likewise, the key to David Buckland's decor – photographs and an overhead canopy hinting at a seashore with kites flying.

Parallel to the score, the dance is a mental and physical exertion that comes out all right in the end, a celebration in baroque metre by 12 dancers that turns over at high speed but broadly, without the group ever looking hurried. There is all the formality of linear and geometric formations: a long diagonal for the whole cast, gradually pulled round a right angle from which dancers plunge, stretch and fall out and back in marked poses, the end of a fall carefully arranged. But there is personal, sensual attention too, a duo or trio, perhaps framed in a stage speckled with onlookers, tender holds, creamy convolutions.

Hints of movements from Davies's other work appear to flash by here and there; the title encourages us to notice the front-on plié, soft, erratic versions of Graham's falls and body bends. The work gathers into mass circular formations and ends with Patrick Harding-Irmer in flight, his colleagues turning him aloft, a symbol of company rapport and aspirations, but without a grain of sentimentality.

While the Covent Garden Royal Ballet is out touring abroad (like LCDT, it has also been saluting New York), the **Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet** has stepped in for its mini-season at the Royal Opera house. At last, it has access to a London stage big enough to mount its much acclaimed production of *Swan Lake*. This version of Ivanov/Petipa's classic, by Peter Wright and Galina Samsova, is far superior to the familiar home company affair, sensible, challenging and well suited to a young ensemble, emphasising the darkness of its tale with a dramatic logic that contemporary audiences seek. In such sumptuous surroundings, you understand the ambitions of the production, especially the decor and costumes by Philip Prowse, strongly suggestive of Eisenstein's old Russia.

The high point of the opening night performance was the final act at the lakeside as Odette and Siegfried are reunited and then resolve to escape the evil of von Rothbart in immolation. Here, after a rather muted performance by the leading principals Samsova and David Ashmore (recently indisposed), the entire company drew together, charged anew, *corps* eloquent in support of the final *pas de deux*.

The other company programme has mixed the mild disturbances of David Bintley's *Night Moves* with the toyshop frolics of Massine's *La Boutique Fantasque* and the intensity of Macmillan's *The Invitation* (1960), on the theme of Edwardian adolescent frustration and rape. This last draws on an exemplary cast in Marion Tait and Roland Price as the brutalised girl and her cousin, Samsova and Desmond Kelly, inimical, desolate representatives of an emotionally wrecked older generation. Its statements contained and compressed, its characters sharply etched, it achieves far more potent expression than any of the recent time-indulgent ballets by this choreographer. □

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TELEVISION
Hugo Williams

Snap

'NICHOLAS ROEG is one of Britain's most controversial film directors. His pictures are complex, perplexing, occasionally disturbing. Roeg himself is something of an enigma – a private, complicated man who . . .' Poor chap, by the time he'd fought his way through the *Radio Times*, not to mention the bursts of nonsense coming from *Top of the Pops* on BBC-1, to **The Guardian Lecture** at the NFT (BBC-2), he was so complicated he could hardly open his mouth. He wasn't helped by the fact that he'd just had his jaw wired together following a road accident and was speaking, if at all, like a real hard-bitten type. 'Breaking glass seems to obsess you in your film', said interviewer Philip Strick, smitten by nerves at Roeg's misfortune. 'Yes, it is rather frightening', muttered Roeg, 'it's so . . . unpredictable.'

We cowered for a moment inside a clip of the famous fall scene from *Don't Look Now*, glass everywhere. Then Strick thought Roeg must spend much time over the 'highly complex' sound-tracks of his film. This was right. It was another level. Roeg didn't like music breaking like a wave over an actress's head. 'I like to use source material where I can, stuff she herself might like . . .' Someone pressed the channel selector at this point and Musical Youth were revealed to have

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abandoned their tallowy reggae roots and to be cloning the Jackson Five for America, a persistent effect on TOTP. 'The musical business is impossible to deal with now', said Roeg through clenched teeth, 'it simply takes too long to clear a thing, so you can't use it finally.' We saw the water scene from *Walkabout*, where the girl uses English to describe thirst to a young aborigine. He doesn't understand, until her young brother does a 'glug-glug' mime. '*That* is what films are', said Roeg helplessly; 'the child understood . . .' Throughout the interview there was a shadowy film of his accident trying to get itself seen somewhere in the background.

Roeg was followed into the loose box by David Shepherd (**Behind the Scenes With,** BBC-2), the man who does those elephant pictures behind non-reflecting glass down at your local Peter Scott outlet. 'Every day there seem to be about 17,000 new elephant painters in the business', said Shepherd sarcastically, 'but they make the mistake of thinking you can paint them sitting at home from photographs.' Didn't he realise we could see him sitting at home painting an elephant from a photograph? 'When I read that the Great Green Nude print had given way to my Wise Old Elephant print in the Art Charts, I thought: "Hello!" Now I only do elephants in limited editions. I'm doing this one for the Save the Rhinoceros Fund.' He added a real-looking bullet-hole to a real-looking frayed ear. How to explain the appeal of these chocolate-box leviathans?

Silent, grey and fairly likeable, they are the exact opposite of television, so perhaps we shouldn't knock Shepherd's obsessive promotion of their act. After all, converting photos of elephants into bed-sitting-room anthropomorphism for nurses and thence into millions of pounds for himself doesn't leave the animal dying in the bush the way rhino horn poachers do. What neither elephants nor television nor even elephants on television seem able to muster between them is a shred of artistic credibility for Shepherd and this seems finally to have got to the affable artist: 'Painters who put three eyes on the forehead . . . I don't call that Art and neither do my clients.' David, you blew it! You had yourself under control, then you went and OD'd on coffee or adrenalin or something. Why?

No such qualms were experienced by members of the CAA (Cowboy Artists of America). 'The Lure of the Wilderness, the Quest for Adventure' and the millions to be made from photographing the few remaining traditional ranches with a zoom lens and turning the photos into saucy, back-lit 'paintings' for 'collectors' was the subject of last Sunday's **South Bank Kitsch Show** (ITV). 'The more dust we can stir up in there', said Gordon Snidow, snapping away in the corral, 'the better the picture becomes. As the dust rises (snap), why, the sun catches it (snap) and you get that golden line around it that you need for a good picture.' We better believe that when Gordon says golden he means golden. He's got the whole booming cowboy painting business stitched up in a Navajo blanket and hanging in the Museum of Modern Art 'to give it status'. He's even taken himself for a ride.

'The thing that binds cowboys together', he drawls, 'is their feeling for animals and the country. They like to look a certain way and they're proud of the way they look.' Now you can't expect the Marlboro Men in their Village apartments back East, where Snidow's freeze-frames titled things like 'A Heck of a Hand', 'Eyeing the Catch-hand' or 'That Sucker's Gonna Buck Sure as Hell' find their natural resting place alongside the Nautilus equipment and the bucket of industrial vaseline, to argue with that kind of judgment. 'You put a cowboy on a horse', says Snidow, 'and there's no greater feeling in the world . . . Before daylight, in the dark, you just *know* that the other cowboys are out there waiting.' Of course you do! And how can any red-blooded American resist that kind of evocation, that kind of *art*?

'It never happened before and it'll never happen again', says Gary Niblet, another member of the CAA, who specialises in Pueblo Indians. 'But we still want to experience coming across the plains in the wagon train, experience the Indians coming over the hill . . .' And why shouldn't he? Gary gets very excited fixing up Indians in historical poses against the mountains. He should reconstruct the Great Indian Uprising of 1850 and have it go the other way for a change. That I'd call artistic. □

THEATRE
Benedict Nightingale

Low-powered

Beethoven's Tenth
PETER USTINOV *Vaudeville*
Crimes of the Heart
BETH HENLEY *Bush*
Lear
EDWARD BOND *Pit*

Since one of my own odder fantasies consists of driving Shakespeare from Stratford to London and exploiting his 370-year jet-lag by bombarding him with killer-questions about Mr W. H. and the Dark Lady, I am clearly in no position to reprove Peter Ustinov for making somewhat similar use of Beethoven at the Vaudeville. Indeed, his new play seemed doubly inviting in prospect. It would allow him to have no doubt infectious fun with Beethoven, and us to renew our acquaintance with a roly-poly face and Michelin-man body too seldom seen on our stages. Ustinov is, of course, a master of impersonation, especially when a mid-European accent is required; and the old, pouchy, cantankerous genius of 1825 would obviously come as easily to him as ocean-travel to a whale.

And so it proves, up to a point. At any rate, Ustinov's Beethoven is an arresting enough physical presence, with his trundling gait, rancid-looking clothes, and blenched jowls heaving podgily away under what appears to be a bedraggled Brillo pad. The problem is what to do with the curmudgeonly maestro once he's been magicked down to London 1983 from what must have been a seedy commercial hotel in a pretty run-down section of the Elysian Fields. After all, the mileage in incidents akin to my showing the Bard round the Barbican is strictly limited. Beethoven is taken aback by tubular chairs, records and cassette-players, and appalled by the world of cars, traffic lights and hamburger joints beyond the upmarket room in which the play occurs. As we'd expected, he pronounces the metropolis 'hell'; and that, more or less, is that.

So Ustinov concentrates on two more particular matters: art and the family. Beethoven has, you see, landed up in a household whose dry, embittered head is also a music critic, so both of these subjects can be aired naturally enough. And, if I follow Mr Ustinov's reasoning about the first, it is that we tend to over-scrutinise, over-intellectualise what should give us unselfconscious joy. At any rate, Beethoven is allowed to complain to the critic, who fancies he knows more about him than he knows about himself, of scholars and historians who 'analyse the urine in your chamberpot' and 'try to find your darkest secrets'. The trouble is that the point is stated rather than demonstrated by argument, conflict or confrontation between prying host and eminent guest. As it is, the critic politely asks just one importunate question, about the identity of the 'immortal beloved'; the ghosts of Countess Giulietta Guiccardi and others materialise, to give us a speculative history-lesson, awkwardly interpolated; and that, again, is that.

This brings us to the family, to which Beethoven becomes catalyst and mentor, a one-man counselling service from Olympus. He sees the critic's envy of his composer-son. He makes the son aware of the limitations of his work, but only to inspire him 'to prove me wrong'. He helps release the wife and mother, a retired singer, from the more self-destructive aspects of her dependence on both men. He sees that the au-pair is pregnant by the young composer, and gravely encourages their union. 'Before he came we were all much deafer than he was', someone remarks, 'now we're listening.' And that's the conclusion of a play which, for all the invention and humour of particular lines, left me disappointed and even irritated. Disappointed, because Ustinov, of whom we continue to expect so much, still seems unable to bring wit, idea and plot into an effective mutual relationship. Irritated, because to transport so awesome a figure so awfully far, and then use him primarily as four not-very-interesting people's agony auntie, strikes me as a pretty reckless waste of resources, akin to hiring a combine harvester to cut your fingernails.

Crimes of the Heart won its author a Pulitzer Prize in 1981, a triumph that should not, however, be too severely held against it. Only occasionally does it threaten to succumb to that winsomeness which is Broadway's bane and blight. Mostly, it is good, wry Southern stuff, plausibly exuding the sound of crunched nuts and cracked belles.

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Its subject and concern is three sisters, longing, not exactly for the local Moscow, but for a fresh start in their emotional lives. One feels she's dying of terminal old-maidism; another, a failed singer turned promiscuous, hopes to unhook the neighbourhood Mr Right from his wife; the third has just shot her husband, a gruesome state senator given to telling bad jokes and cheating people. Perhaps their encounters are a little underpowered – if only Tennessee Williams were still alive to bite the characters and get them foaming at the lips – but they keep you wanting to know what happens next, how and why. The pick of the cast is Amanda Redman, a Mississippi plum on the turn; but Simon Stokes gets nice performances from Wendy Morgan, Robert Glenister and others, too.

Shakespeare's Lear makes a spiritual journey, Bond's a social and political one. In fact, he becomes the dramatic equivalent of one of his author's prefaces or poems, embodying what was the Correct View in 1971, when the play was first staged: a belief, very different from the Correct View now, that the solution to society's evils isn't to be found in left-wing violence, something all too likely to end by institutionalising Stalinism. I admire much of what **Lear** says, as well as its size and scope; yet, after seeing it four times and reading it seven, I find it a thinner, more easily exhausted piece than its seeming abundance might suggest. Still, the RSC animates Bond's sermon as successfully as may be, thanks largely to a strong central performance from Bob Peck, a marvellously intense patriarch. □

FILMS
John Coleman

Making history

The Ploughman's Lunch (15)
Gate, Notting Hill
That Championship Season (15)
Classic, Haymarket
The Sting II (PG)
Plaza
Starflight One (U)
Classic, Haymarket; London release

We all know about the Dream Factory but, until just the other day, the film situation in Britain verged on the ridiculous. Anyone looking for home-bred movies bearing a realistic relation to the way we live now, touching – however tentatively – on the facts of politics, had to be content with a growing body of serious work made for the small screen. Not surprising, then, that Karl Francis's *Giro City* should have been greeted with such critical warmth, a welcome spiced with relief that someone had at last had a go; nor that its director was an experienced TV hand and its primary subject-matter the bureaucratic interference suffered by some TV documentary makers. Now, with Richard Eyre's admirable first feature **The Ploughman's Lunch**, there is fresh cause for applause, a *cinema* occasion produced by a new company, Greenpoint Films, composed of people mostly trained up in television. Once again, the media get a going-over in the process, but this is a comprehensively different kind of event from that mounted by Mr Francis, something anyway that a beady script from Ian McEwan might guarantee. The inner circles it mostly inhabits belong to a recognisable, contemporary and metropolitan hell, where ambition, snobbery and a high, secular cynicism reign, and history – even recent history – is that stuff you re-write to suit the prevailing market and morality.

Glum, faintly stricken Jonathan Pryce plays James, a BBC radio news editor on the make for posh Susan (Charlie Dore), who works at London Weekend, as well as for fame and pelf as a popular historian. He is the sort of modern man who pretends to chic friends that his suburban parents are dead (his ailing mum is to die in fact before the end), relishes lunch at Langan's with his ultra-smart publisher (he has contributed a chapter on the Berlin airlift to a volume on the Cold War), sniggers openly with his trendy journalist chum Jeremy (Tim Curry, in spine-chilling form as a languid, lighthearted sophisticate) as the usual idiot questions are asked at a friend's poetry-reading, and is aghast when his car breaks down in the country and some peace-camp women welcome him as a Beeb hack with naively open arms. No socialist to his publisher, for whom he is doing a book on the '56 Suez crisis (bending the realities to fit with the current upsurge of Falklands-factor patriotism – the film is *that* up-to-the-minute), he's a copper-bottomed leftie when closeted with Susan's mother Ann (Rosemary Harris), a Labour historian, at their grandish Norfolk house. Not so incidentally, this sweet, susceptible woman has a philandering second husband, Matthew (Frank Finlay), often away making TV commercials, and she makes her way to James's bed during a weekend visit. Later, James uses that poet-pal to stem her loving importunities via a cowardly phone-call.

A bleak world, then, not without savage humour but populated with power-hungry bastards. Eyre's clever, glancing movie is full of sharp lines and speaking details. James tries to sneak a borrowed tyre-lever back to the women's camp unseen and has a subsequent horrid moment, scurrying past a posse of them demonstrating at the Tory Party conference in Brighton. In London, complaisant Matthew positively encourages the affair with Ann, invites him to watch one of those Thirties-nostalgic bedtime drink ads in the making, and – key-moment – interprets the title. The ploughman's lunch was invented in the Sixties to boost pub custom: 'it's a completely successful fabrication of the past'. Ann has urged: 'Everyone must have a memory. Everyone must be a historian.' Fat chance, says the film, in today's manipulative culture. A boring Pole crops up briefly in Norfolk, sending Susan yawning to bed: his presence serves to jog a fascinating Pole into the mind, Andrzej Wajda – and his *Man of Iron*.

For the coup of this allusive and sometimes elusive whirl through easy-going, everyday corruption, where a bland knowingness is all, surely comes in the professional trip taken by Jeremy, Susan and James to that Brighton conference, merry on champers as they drive down. The Barbican art gallery, the Zanzibar cocktail bar, the offices of Hamish Hamilton have already lent a rare capital-city authority. But the infiltration of the conference hall, with Heseltine and the dragon-lady in full rhetorical flow on the platform, by actors allowed to wander like participating journalists has extraordinary impact. As a shit who has failed to grasp the obvious, old James gets his come-uppance here, as long-time buddies Jeremy and Susan make it clear they are lovers. (To be honest, this goes for less than it might, since the Susan-actress's charms are a degree less than grabbing.) Final flourishes of authenticity are furnished by the fleeting appearance of Paul Johnson, beaming at Brighton; and the special thanks accorded to Christopher Reid (for the poem), the Greenham Common women, Christopher Hitchens and – happily still with us – Francis Wheen. Remember: you read it first in the *New Statesman*, the cosmopolitan weekly for those in the know – and in the Zanzibar.

Short shrift: directed and drawn by Jason Miller from his own stage-play, **That Championship Season** has an hilarious gag about a dead elephant but elsewhere shreds the talents of such as Robert Mitchum, Bruce Dern, Stacy Keach, Martin Sheen and Paul Sorvino in a lachrymose confessional reunion of some Scranton, Pennsylvania, high school basketball champions and their coach 25 years on. **The Sting II** is the sequel zero. And John Dykstra's accolade for special effects in **Starflight One** must be for making a brick out of straw and then dropping it. □

ART
John Spurling

On the mat

The Eastern Carpet in the Western World
Hayward
Carpet Magic
Barbican

There was some amusement among my *NS* colleagues when I suggested writing about carpets. Carpet-knights, carpet-baggers, carpet-slippers, wall-to-wall carpeting: they have a bad name and are thought of more as a craft than an art. Yet pots have gradually become respectable art-objects and why not carpets? My own convictions were still a little shaky, though, as I started the wrong way round the Hayward exhibition and was confronted immediately by a monster, 16 metres long, from the Mughal Empire. Rather worn and seen from one end stretch-

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ing down a kind of black tunnel, it speaks of seedy hotel corridors more than Indian palaces. I remained sceptical in the next gallery in a dim religious light with large carpets displayed on walls and low plinths and the distinct impression of a very superior saleroom. But this instinctively hostile reaction, that you only make such a fuss of carpets if you're trying to sell them, soon wore off as I began to focus on the things themselves.

These are no ordinary rugs. They all date from the 15th to 17th centuries, when Eastern carpets became as important, desirable and influential to the princes, merchants and artists of Europe as the artistic wares of China and Japan did in the 18th and 19th centuries. These particular carpets have survived because they were always outstanding works of art and now mostly belong to museums. If there were carpet salesmen present in the shadows, they were more likely to be on their knees paying homage to legendary and for ever unsaleable treasures than shooting a line.

Learning to distinguish one kind of carpet from another is as hard as finding your way through the movements and counter-movements of the 20th century. It is partly a matter of recognizing complex and superficially similar patterns, often called after the European painters who depicted them: Holbeins, Lottos, Bellinis. The scholars – and the scholarly catalogue for this show – do their best with talk of stars, medallions, cartouches, octagons, and almost succeed in convincing you that you would know a Persian from a Cairene or a Ushak from an Ottoman and all four from a para-Mamluk if you met them in the Portobello Road on a clear day. But for a first visitor there is really nothing to do but relax into a state of pure appetite for colour and design.

Halfway through the exhibition there is an extraordinary recent find, a 10-metre Ottoman from Cairo, strong green on deep red, with a pale blue border, which was given to the Medici Duke Ferdinando II in 1623 by an Admiral Verrazzano (descendant, presumably, of the explorer who was eaten by Caribs on the island of Guadeloupe). It has lain forgotten in the store-rooms of the Pitti Palace more or less ever since and any carpet salesman you meet in its vicinity will surely be in a dead faint, since this is its first public showing. But if you go the wrong way round the exhibition, your greatest experience will be near the end, for the Medicis also owned – and also stashed away until it was rediscovered three months ago – a second huge carpet from Cairo, a Mamluk in red, blue and greeny-yellow, whose constantly shifting combinations seem to rise off the surface and float in the air like a haze. Never mind that it is made of knotted wool instead of paint, it is one of the world's masterpieces of colour, comparable with a Seurat, a Monet, a Rothko.

The exhibition at the Barbican is a less intense though not less pleasurable event. The carpets mostly date back only a century or so and are less grand and prestigious – but though many of the items must be accounted primitive and crude compared with those at the Hayward, the variety of motifs is astonishing. □

JAZZ
Charles Fox

Generation game

New Orleans in the Twenties
VJM VLP 46
Red Allen Meets Kid Ory
Polydor 2304 544
All the Magic
LESTER BOWIE *ECM 1246/7, 2 LPs*

Historians like to see one thing leading to another, a pattern of cause and effect. Jazz aficionados adopt the same sort of attitude, always eager to regard major soloists as begetting one another like kings of Judea. Similarly, only one city at a time is allowed to be in a state of aesthetic ferment: New Orleans until Storyville got closed down and boll weevils chewed up the cotton crop; Chicago at the height of mobster rule; New York and Kansas City during the Depression. Reality, of course, tends to ramble much more untidily. The VJM LP is a reminder that New Orleans jazz did not transfer itself to Chicago simply because Louis Armstrong and Jelly Roll Morton had moved there. All 20 of its tracks were recorded in New Orleans between March 1927 and November 1928.

Louis Dumaine's Jazzola Eight were led by a trumpeter who was chary about launching into solos but could lay down a reliable lead. The band's star soloist, clarinettist Willie Joseph, combined a waspish tone with obvious hero-worship for Johnny Dodds. Maybe the scoops and swirls sometimes got too exaggerated, edging towards the theatricality of Boyd Senter, but 'Franklin Street Blues' finds the passion convincingly proportioned. The overall effect is of rough, exciting jazz.

Much more finesse and every bit as much intensity is provided by the Jones and Collins Astoria Hot Eight, led jointly by a saxophonist, Davey Jones, and Lee Collins, a trumpeter with a ravishing tone and behind-the-beat phrasing. He sounds a bit like Armstrong in 'Duet Stomp' but is at his most gorgeous in 'Tip Easy Blues'. Also on hand was Sidney Arodin, a clarinettist with the kind of incisive sting in his playing that seemed to be acquired only in Chicago.

Arodin was unusual at that time in performing with both black and white groups. He turns up, for example, in Monk Hazel's Bienville Roof Orchestra, otherwise all-white yet nicely loose in style, with Sharkey Bonano's trumpet offering a clean, uncomplicated lead.

Nobody, not even Louis Armstrong, could be said to have begotten Henry 'Red' Allen, arguably the last great trumpeter to hail from New Orleans (Wynton Marsalis, the newest contender, still has to prove his originality). Allen broke away from the Miltonic splendours of Armstrong's style, splaying across the bar-lines, playing rhythmic tricks, always melodic but in surprising, paradoxical ways. After going north Allen worked in big bands and led small groups on 52nd Street, but in 1959 he was reunited with Kid Ory, a great New Orleans bandmaster as well as the trombonist who perfected the so-called tailgate style. Ory's trombone playing has a purgative function, rasping yet necessary. He thrusts the band forward while Allen coruscates around him.

If New Orleans and its environs produced the pick of the early jazz trumpeters, St Louis, a longish haul by riverboat up the Mississippi, became their next breeding ground. Clark Terry, Harold Baker and Miles Davis were just three to be reared in that city. Another is Lester Bowie. Nowadays Bowie is a key figure in the Art Ensemble of Chicago, but his background includes working in circus bands and touring the south with soul and R&B groups. All that experience surfaces on his new album. It commences with a salute to Louis Armstrong, then ranges from free jazz to gospel music. Fontella Bass (she was Bowie's first wife) sings with pulsating authority, while the tenor saxophonist, Ari Brown, alternates between sounding like Albert Ayler and a bar-room honker.

The second LP in the album presents Bowie entirely on his own, but making use of overdubbing as well as a doughty armoury of effects. As a soloist in a group he lacks the combative flair of Red Allen, or, come to that, the poignant sheen of Lee Collins. If anybody begat him it was Rex Stewart, with whom he shares a compulsion to explore freakish possibilities. When he sets about operating alone, however, Bowie puts me in mind of the saxophonist John Surman, for both men work like composers, assembling pieces bit by bit. Attempts at onomatopoeia mar a couple of tracks: the gurgling in 'Thirsty', ubiquitous church-bells in 'All About Christmas'. But most of these vignettes – the word seems to pinpoint what Bowie is up to – present a happy conjoining of talent and imagination. □

WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 2772 **Set by Peter Alexander**

'Caviar is the roe of the virgin sturgeon', etc., wrote Ogden Nash. It has now been revealed that the sturgeon mates for life. This, and other lesser known habits of animals, have not been celebrated in verse. Please supply the deficiency. Max. 16 lines, by 10 June.

No 2769 **Set by B. Mooring**

The Bible re-told by popular authors.

Report **By Al Fresco**

Capital. Nine Somerset-Newtons apiece for Simmers's and Bellenger's Authorised P. G. Wodehouse Version, Kemp's A. A. Milne and Beckingham's Barbara Cartland.

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Being a sharp old bird, the Lord undoubtedly noticed, during his routine breakfast-time inspection, that his chosen people were hardly punishing the morning kipper with their usual gusto. Zip was lacking. Bounce and pep ditto. Chirpy fellows who generally enlivened mealtimes by putting top-spin on a few bread rolls were today as sparkling as old socks. Spirits, apparently, were being worn low.

Not that gloom was unreasonable among chaps facing a Philistine who measured more cubits than anyone cared to contemplate. One, moreover, who at this moment was probably breakfasting on rusty nails and old breastplates.

Morale plummeted further at the arrival of the repulsive child hitherto noted for his exploits in the sheep-supervision business. Dark suspicions about the provenance of certain inky pellets were confirmed by the sight of a catapault in his hand.

'I could help you if I wanted to', the urchin announced smugly. GEORGE SIMMERS

Simon Peter
Known as The Fisherman
Said to himself, said he,
'Is Christ Jesus
Just trying to tease us
When he says we can walk on the sea?'
Simon Peter
Known as The Fisherman
Stepped from the edge of his boat.
Simon Peter
Vanished abruptly
Scarcely appearing to float.
Christ Jesus
Told his Disciples,
'Disciples', he said, said he,
'Nobody oughter
Go walk on the water
If they don't believe in Me!' PHILIP KEMP

One of these yokel coves was apt to be rather reckless when it came to sprinkling the old seed. His aim was rather more thither than hither, if you follow me. And when a sower is acting like an unusually keen chucker of confetti, our feathered friends do not beat about the bush, or wherever they are posted. Wolves on the fold are slow by comparison. An average bird does not wait for grace or spread his napkin on his knee, but tucks in like bingo.

Meanwhile, more of the stuff hit what we sons of the soil call concrete, where, after a bounce and a half, it presented itself for a dose of sunstroke. Still more of his cargo went full toss into the rough, where thorns keep a beady eye open for just such an occurrence. Only the occasional lucky fling gave the season of mellow fruitfulness a sporting chance.

Of course, this is all rather like life.

WILL BELLENGER

Boaz, carelessly happy but still a great gentleman, fell asleep on the heap of corn. Ruth tiptoed to his side and stood almost in awe. How handsome he was, yet how truly masculine. She parted the rich material of his robes, uncovering his well-formed feet, and lay down beside him.

At midnight he awoke. A woman at his feet! Surely he had never seen anyone so lovely, as the moonlight revealed her shoulders, white against the rippling waves of her hair, the little pulse beating madly in her throat, and above all her wide eyes, shining between their long lashes. 'Who are you?' he demanded, his voice raw with his utterly human need for her. 'Ruth', she whispered, colour flooding her face. 'Oh, you darling,' he exclaimed with a laugh of sheer happiness, 'are you quite sure I'm not too old for you, my precious?' CAROLYN BECKINGHAM

FIRST PERSON

Anna Coote

Back to the roots

HOW FINE it would be to have just one politically respectable forbear. An Owenite great-grandfather, a suffragette granny, a miner or a mill girl somewhere in recent family history – even a liberal reformer, for heaven's sake – a root I could point to with something like pride.

My paternal grandfather bequeathed us an embarrassing document which records the history of the Coote family and tells me that I am the granddaughter of the second son of the second son of the Rev. Sir Algernon Coote, 11th Bart. Great-great-great grandpa Algernon was just a vicar in Tunbridge Wells until his elder brother, Sir Charles Henry, died without heir and left him in charge of an Ionic-pillared pile in Ballyfin. The Irish connection is traced to another Sir Charles Coote, who crossed the water in the service of King James I, to be made a baronet of Ireland in 1621. To achieve this distinction, Sir Charles slaughtered huge numbers of Irish men and women who were fighting the Protestant oppressor. He made a special name for himself in unprovoked massacres, and my favourite passage in the Coote history describes how he finally copped it 'defending the garrison at Trim'. Our geneaologist is tactful: 'Sir Charles . . . was shot dead, but whether by the enemy or one of his own troopers is variously reported.' A musketful in the back from his own man: a fitting end.

For the record, I have never met any titled Cootes and doubt I ever shall. Nor is there any fortune left; I believe they spent it all on Moral Rearmament in the early 20th century. In any case, this habit of passing names through the male line is an invention of patriarchy and I will not be held to account for what Cootes have done. Who can say that a union in some other branch of my family doesn't link me just as directly with Luke Toole, the Irish rebel leader whom Sir Charles slew?

My female lineage isn't recorded, of course. All I can trace is a short line of West Country rectory-dwellers. My mother's mother, Violet, actually cut loose from the clergy to marry a naval man with a tattoo on his forearm. But the tattooed sailor, himself no more than a mildly delinquent rectory-dweller, was destined to accumulate many gold stripes on his sleeve and the happy couple ended their days as pillars of a north Dorset parish – he warding the church while she made jam for the WI.

My mother followed Violet's footsteps and married into the navy, which meant that we dodged about from base to base throughout my childhood. The closest thing to 'home' became the Dorset village where my grandmother lived – Marnhull, on the edge of the Blackmoor Vale. I went back this month for the first time in many years. Well, if I can't expose my roots in public, I might as well enjoy a surreptitious fondle now and then.

At one end of the village, in a valley by a stream, is an old stone cottage where we lived for two years while my father was at sea. At the other end is a lovely old house where we stayed with my grandparents for so many holidays and homecomings. I peeked into the gardens where I used to play, checked out the school where I learned to do joined-up writing, and drove through the narrow lanes where I pedalled my first bike. It was all there, apparently unscathed by 30 years of agribusiness. Tall hedgerows and beech trees brilliantly green in the May sun. Purple flowers spilling over stone walls. Moss. Wood smoke. Bluebells. Wood pigeons. Mmm, how very soothing.

My grandmother may never have set fire to a pillar box, or toiled in a cotton mill, but she was warm and soft with a house full of comforting smells: lavender, lily of the valley, rock cakes, roast lunch. She had an Aga in her kitchen, a clock with a silvery chime in her hall, big bowls of flowers and deep armchairs in her drawing room. Intoxicating stuff. What was I doing, I wondered, with London and the Labour Party and Channel 4? I wanted to lie in fresh-mown grass, drown in the silence of summer flies, roll in all the rural clichés of old England. This root-fondling is a dangerous game.

I went to the village post office for a picture postcard to send my mother. There it was at the crossroads, same as ever. Inside, three pensioners and a mild buzz of conversation. As I hovered dreamily by the colouring books and crayons, I suddenly heard the word 'Afghanistan'. One of them was saying: 'Anyone who thinks the Russians can be trusted needs their head examined . . .' The three old dears were working themselves into a spitting rage about the Communists. 'Lust to kill . . . ' 'Remember the war . . .' Eyes narrowed venomously under felt hats. England needed *more* nuclear weapons.

I paid for my postcard and hurried outside. If Marnhull had changed as little as it seemed, there wouldn't be a socialist for miles and even Liberals would be perilously thin on the ground. Nice about the rural bliss. Pity about the politics.

Leaving the village, I went to the church to find my grandparents' grave. It wasn't easy. I must have read a hundred headstones before I spotted the one raised in memory of John Luxmore Syson, Rear Admiral Royal Navy, and his beloved wife, Violet Swinburne Syson. They were tucked away in a secluded corner of the churchyard and, as I looked around at the nearby graves, I realised what a special corner it was. Here were the double-barrelled names, the generals and the CBEs: the departed gentry in their own little patch. Dust to dust but, thank God, dust of the right sort. Farewell, Marnhull, my roots are in your soil, but not (I hope) too deep. □

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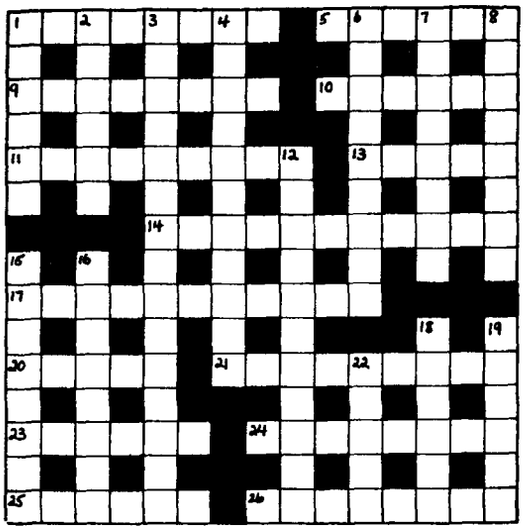
Weekend Crossword 1402

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1402, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 7 June.



Name_____

Address_____

_____

_____

ACROSS

1. Annoying to me without losses of temper. (8)
5. The religious are in a certain retreat here. (6)
9. Posh couples go all round the street, but not where the servants are. (8)
10. If a marine deserted the fleet, a girl would be left behind. (6)
11. Encounters like Chelsea v Bath? (9)
13. Bury going the whole season without a point. (5)
14. The loser has got to make love twice outside his home. (6,5)
17. Stomach an article different in manner. (3,5,3)
20. Subject town. (5)
21. The fresh article seen in the shop is pottery. (9)
23. Sad return of skill in smoking? (6)
24. Being most unattractive, I make my home with Chinese soldiers. (8)
25. Something to eat produced by an appeal to the cooker. (6)
26. The cricketer is concerned in what may crop up in the field. (8)

DOWN

1. Digits needed for lifts? (6)
2. Rebellion in naval outfit is wrong. (6)
3. Teacher is holding his stomach up. (5)
4. Lady who makes funny noises after a walk. (11)
6. The media personality of a clergyman without relations. (9)
7. The response when analysed may still give one no trace. (8)
8. Practising for the fight knocks one up before the boxing. (8)
12. It is very flattening when mates are tossed about by the wave. (11)
14. Out for a ramble, we come round and call. (9)
15. Weapon used in smashing up a toilet on the street. (8)
16. Where a dreamer gets confused. (8)
18. General who would have secured victory in Europe without defensive works. (6)
19. Top people make an attempt to follow the news. (6)
22. Heath makes one care madly. (5)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1400

D	E	S	C	R	I	B	E		F	L	O	W	E	R
E		Y		E		I		C		E		I		E
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T	R	E	V	I	N	O		E	M	E	N	D	E	D
H		T		L		P		O		R				E
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E		N		E		N		P		N		O		E
S	A	D	I	S	T		B	E	D	E	C	K	E	D

Prizewinners to 1400

E. M. Brenchley (Maidstone)
John M. Brown (Staffs)
Jack Corrigan (West Lothian)

Holidays/Travel

KIEV by train 30 July-9 August, 13-23 August £170
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FAMILY HOUSE to let. Suit academic family or like. Finchley, N12 area. 4 bedrooms, c/h and mod-cons, small garden. Rent £400 per month, available one year. Call Chris Webb, 01-969 8942 or 01-249 5617.

LONDON HOUSE to let to American academic, 16 July to 20 August. Sleeps 6. Walking distance British Museum. £100 per week. References. Box 6013.

METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON. Pleasant, furnished house to sub-let July, August (3 b-r, a/c, w/d garden). Direct subway to city centre, Library of Congress. All facilities walking dist. Safe! $600 p.c.m. plus utils. Exc. refs reqd. Helena Cobban, 702 N. Irving St, Arlington, Va 22201, USA. Initial enquiry to Sir James Cobban, Old Vicarage, Steventon, Oxon OX13 6SJ.

CLASSIFIED AD FORM

Private ads under 'Personal' cost £1.60 per 6 words (min. 12 words £3.20). All other ads £1.70 per 6 words (min. 12 words - £3.40). Box Nos. £2.

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Address .....

.....

Classification required .....

No. of weeks required ..... Remittance enclosed.....

Remittance payable to New Statesman. Send to Classified Ads, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Deadline 1st post Tuesdays

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For all other classifications – £1.70 per unit of 6 words (min. 2 units £3.40).
First two words automatically bold, further bold words cost 30p each.
Box number service – U.K. £2 per insertion. Overseas £4 per insertion.
Display: £7.30 per single column centimetre (min. 3 s.c.c. – £21.90). **Special rate for charities – £6.30 per s.c.c.** (min. 3 s.c.c. £18.90).
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Telex – 28499.
To reply to a Box, write to Box No. ... at the above address

Appointments

NUPE

(National Union of Public Employees)

Arising from a review of our Head Office structure, applications are now invited for the following posts:

SENIOR RESEARCH OFFICER

The successful applicant will be the Senior Officer of the Research section and will report to the Deputy General Secretary. He or she will contribute research work as well as co-ordinating work of other staff. The suitable candidate will have the ability to work with people and to develop a co-operative team attitude, and will be able to demonstrate an ability to undertake research work in a trade union.

The salary will be **£10,718-£11,690** + London Weighting Allowance of **£1,157.57** per annum. A car will be provided.

EDUCATION OFFICER

The successful applicant will be the Senior Officer of the Education section and will report to the Deputy General Secretary. The Education section consists of a small group of staff engaged in the production of the Union's education material. The successful applicant will co-ordinate the work of the section, take an active part in the detailed work of education (incl. teaching) and will also have some involvement in co-ordinating divisional education. The successful applicant will have experience in trade union education.

The salary will be **£10,232-£11,204** + London Weighting Allowance of **£1,157.57** per annum. A car will be provided.

Application forms for both posts available from:

Maureen Chapman, NUPE, 20 Grand Depot Road, Woolwich, London SE18 6SF. Telephone: 01-854 2244 – and they should be returned by 14 June, 1983.

RESOURCE CENTRE INFORMATION WORKERS

ECUADOR

To join a centre for workers' education and information in Quito, to set up a new resource centre for printed and other materials. The information worker will also be involved in educational and outreach work, including helping groups set up local resource centres.

Applicants should have substantial experience in documentation work with community groups or trade union organisations. Experience in teaching, or in producing educational materials would also be useful.

Two year contract on basic salary, with return air fares, Spanish language training if needed, various grants and insurance.

CIIR **For job description and application form, please send a brief cv and large SAE to CIIR, 22 Coleman Fields, London N1 7AF, quoting ref. NS/1.**

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CO-OPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT WORKER

Starting salary (AP5.28) £7,791

We need a further worker to increase the assistance we provide to Workers' Co-operatives.

Please write or phone for further details to:

Leicester and County Co-operative Development Agency
30 New Walk, Leicester LE1 6TS
Telephone: (0533) 554464

OV SELECTION CATERS for the more mature person as well as graduates and 'A' level students with typing and office skills. Phone Odette Veazey, OV Selection (Emp. Agy.) Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London, SW1V 1LT. 01-828 8345.

Academic Appointments

LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

(University of London)

LECTURESHIP IN LAW

Applications are invited for appointment from **1 October 1983** to a lectureship in Law. The Law Department seeks to increase its teaching strength in a number of areas, but some preference may be given to candidates offering *Commercial Law subjects.*

Appointment will be on the salary scale for lecturers of **£6,375** to **£13,505** *a year (under review)* **plus £1,186** *a year* London Allowance. In assessing the starting salary, consideration will be given to qualifications, age and experience.

Application forms and further particulars are available, on receipt of a stamped, addressed envelope, from: The Assistant Secretary (Academic), H610, The London School of Economics, Houghton Street, London WC2A 2AE.

Closing date for applications: **27 June 1983.**

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ANXIOUS ABOUT privacy? Mail received, personal or business, with total confidentiality. £1.50 p.w. 'Answer & Receive', 21 Kensington Park Road, London W11. 01-229 1888 (you can collect, or we can *readdress by arrangement*).

ARE YOU a lively minded individual, aged 18-80, enjoying the arts, discussions, conferences, communications, rambles, dancing? The Progressive League caters for Mind, Body and Intellectual Stimulus. And it's so cheap. Ring 01-452 8358.

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EXPERIENCED, CARING PSYCHOTHERAPISTS. 01-794 6810, 01-586 4109, 01-883 5418.

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HOMOSEXUAL FABIAN (22), seeks similar high-minded man for platonic friendship. Would who-*ever replied to this ad in NS 6 June please write* again as believe letter lost in post. Box 6022.

I'M BEGINNING to think there are no men my age (46), in the West Midlands, who are intelligent, wholesome and loving, except married ones. Can somebody prove me wrong? Please? Box 6031.

ISOLATED HOMOSEXUAL women read Sequel Magazine. Reply: B/M Sequel, London WC1N 3XX.

LONELY? Why not join London's Friendliest Singles Club, making new friends of all ages? City Circle. 01-914 2098 (9 a.m.-6 p.m.).

MALE GRADUATE seeks tall girl friend. 30+, left-wing, artistic, sensual, more interested in people than possessions. Box 6006.

PIANO TUNER, reliable, North London only unless repairs needed. Denys Parsons MSc, 01-340 4695.

PLEASANT GENTLEMAN with neglected libido, seeks atypical lady friend, who appreciates interesting company. Box 6020.

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN, 50, slim, divorced, seeking right partner to share life and love, would like to meet tall, cultured, unattached man, graduate, *fifties, personable and youthful, who is* similarly discerning. Box 6030.

SCANDINAVIA'S LEADING correspondence magazine read in 100 countries, £2.50. Penfriends (NS), 45 Sandringham Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR2 3RZ.

SINGLE PARENTS ABROAD in Spain, Corfu, France and Majorca. Holiday brochure: 01-629 3957.

SLIM, GOOD-LOOKING academic, seeks cultured lady friend, early forties. Box 5987.

STAR PRIZE of the week – half of dinner for two goes to lively, interesting man, who rescues lady forties and undistressed from Box 6021.

THE TYRO (18-30) Club. *If you're interested in mak-*ing new friends and enjoying an active social life, join our new, exciting Singles Club. 01-914 2098.

TWO EMINENTLY eligible men, average age 34, both single fathers, next door neighbours, considered extremely attractive by each other, but unfortunately not gay: seek two interesting, intelligent, attractive women for cheerful, good-humoured encounters. Box 6007.

VERY ARTISTIC, articulate male, 40s, seeks radical, skinny, perhaps neurotic woman, over 16 years. Box 6009.

WITHOUT JUSTICE There Can Be No Peace. While we suffer from disease of affluence millions will die of starvation. Send 25p for information of a healthy, sustainable way of life possible for all the world's people. Vegan Society Dept IK, 47 Highlands Road, Leatherhead, Surrey.

WOMAN LECTURER, London, 47, loves music (Baroque best), incessant reader of poetry, would like to correspond with like-minded person, far from London. Box 6005.

WOMAN, 33, NW London, writes fiction, wants dependable, loving, single man (photo apprec.), who is also self-questioning, interesting, open, non-factual – plus confident, lively, sensual, healthy and humorous! Box 6014.

YORKS/LANCS/Northumberland. Cancerian female seeks soulmate in Scorpio, male feminist. (Do you exist?). *Late thirties. Intelligence and feeling* essential. Material goodies not. Box 6032.

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Theatres

APOLLO VICTORIA. HOT LINES 01-282 8665, 01-834 0253, 01-834 6177. All credit cards accepted. Evgs 8 p.m. (no perf. Mon.) until 5 June.
LIZA MINNELLI
Opens 9 June at 7.30 p.m. for 10 perfs. 10-19 June evgs at 8 p.m. (no perf. 13 June).
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+ WALL STREET CRASH
TOPOL
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ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY
Seats available 'THE ROARING GIRL' by Middleton & Dekker 1-2, 6-7 June, "Helen Mirren's wonderfully starry turn" Punch. Seats avail. 'THE TAMING OF THE SHREW' 3-4, 13-14 June, "the sort of show that appeals more to audiences than to critics" N. Statesman. THE PIT – few seats avail. 'THE BODY' by Nick Darke 1-2, 6-7 June, "a very powerful play about our perception of the Bomb" Kaleidoscope.

NATIONAL THEATRE. 01-928 2252. Olivier (open stage) 'Guys and Dolls'. 'The Rivals' Lyttelton (proscenium stage) 'A Map of the World', 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. Cottesloe (small auditorium) 'Small Change', 'Kick for Touch'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 01-928 2256.

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE, EC1. 01-278 8916 (5 lines), cc groups 01-379 6061 **THE WELLS STAGECOACH** before and after show bus service, phone BO for details.
Ample free parking after 6.30 p.m.
LONDON CONTEMPORARY DANCE THEATRE in 27/28 May 7.30 p.m. **Stabat Mater Forest Class** and 31 May-4 June 7.30 p.m. **Dancers of Love and Death.** See daily press for prog. details.

THEATRE GOERS please note: cc – Credit cards; S – Student standby.

GLC Peace Year 1983 THEATRE CENTRE
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1983
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Until Sat 28 May, 8p.m.
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Members £2, UB40 £1.40
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Meetings

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RICHARD ADAMS author of Watership Down, etc. speaks on 'The Storyteller: Intermediary Between Two Worlds' at Essex Church, 112 Palace Gardens Terrace, London W8, on Thursday 2 June at 8 p.m. £1 at door.

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Sunday 29 May 8 p.m. Informal /QA meeting 'Life, Sleep, Death'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

German Historical Institute, London
Tuesday, 31 May
Prof. Dr. Konrad Jarausch
(Columbia/Gottingen)
Academic Illiberalism, Students, Culture and Politics in Imperial Germany
17 Bloomsbury Square
London WC1A 2LP
Tea from 4.30 p.m.
Seminar starts at 5 p.m.

Events

WOMEN IN WALES, CELEBRATION AND CHALLENGE, 12-18 Sept, 1983. A week of events by, for and about women. Find out more by contacting Nina Davies, People and Work Unit, 34-38 Stow Hill, Newport. (0633 62326).

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Offers a wide range of courses during 1983 in a most attractive Florentine setting. There are courses in the Italian language at all levels, the Italian Renaissance and Drawing. Magnificent library and study facilities. Accommodation arranged if required. Full details are contained in our 1983 prospectus available from
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TSARIST RUSSIA catalogues available. A. C. Hall, 30 Staines Road, Twickenham TW2 5AH.

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SALARIED PERSONS Postal Loans Ltd. Loans from £50. 175 Regent Street, W1. For written quote apply: Tel. 01-734 1974.

LISTINGS

FRI 27 MAY

BRIXTON New variety incl. gay poet Simon Fanshawe and The Exocets. 8pm Old White Horse Pub, 261 Brixton Road, SW9. Waged £2/Unwaged £1. **Cast Presentations 01-487 3440/274 5537.**

EDINBURGH First Scottish Women's Health Fair. Discns, stalls, films. West End and Princes St. Gardens, Edinburgh. **Org Scottish Health Education Group. Contact Berni Graham 031-229 4180/031-447 8044.**

SAT 28 MAY

LONDON 'Ideology & Capitalism' A basic intro. to different theories of ideology and how they relate to current concerns within feminism & education. Spkrs incl Cora Kaplan, James Donald. 10.30-4.30 Architectural Association, 10 Percy Street, W1. **Org. Conference of Socialist Economists 01-607 9615.**

LONDON Conference on women in Chile for women in Britain. Woman spkr from inside Chile. Workshops, social. Open delegates from TUs/political parties, women's orgs & indiv women. 11-5pm, County Hall. **Org Chile Solidarity Campaign. Details Diane Dixon 01-272 4298.**

BRISTOL Public meeting. Spkrs: Fay Weldon, Zdena Tomin. 6pm The Folk House, 40 Park Street. Collection for END. **Contact Judith Eversley 0225 315480.**

MANCHESTER 'CND, Trade Unions & The Workplace'. 10.30-4pm, Manchester Town Hall. Creche. **Details: Laura Mitchell, Greater Manchester CND Trade Union Co-ordinating Committee 061-682 9334.**

LIVERPOOL National March and Rally to protest against Cruel Experiments on Animals. **Details: Merseyside Animal Aid/BUAV 051-494 0470.**

SUN 29 MAY

LONDON 'A critical view of Israel', 8pm 37 Broadhurst Gdns, NW6. Chair: Roger Ward (Hampstead Labour Party). **Org. Mapam. Details Ruth Goodwin 01-328 2554.**

MON 30 MAY

SCOTLAND Torness Festival of Recreation. Music theatre, stalls, food etc. 2-9pm Barnes Ness. Creche. **Org. Scottish Campaign to Resist the Atomic Menace 031-557 4283.**

BRISTOL 2-day Bike Ride to Upper Heyford USAF blockade. Starts 10am Bristol (overnight stop at Fairford; tents carried by back-up van). 'Arr. Upper Heyford 6pm, 31 May. **Contact Ali, Bristol 553321.**

TUES 31 MAY

UPPER HEYFORD Peace Blockade (4 days) begins outside 6 gates of USAF Upper Heyford, Camp Road (1 gate women only). **Details: Celia/Steve, Steeple Aston 40321.**

UPPER HEYFORD Street musicians and entertainers needed to keep morale high at blockade. **Org Oxford CND. Details: 0865-726441.**

BATTERSEA 'Defended to Death?' – issues in Nuclear Armament and Disarmament. Course org Battersea CND, Tues eves. Tonight: The Background to Cruise, Pershing II, SS-20s and Trident; NATO & Warsaw Pact nuclear strategy. 7.30-9.30pm. Junction Resource Centre, 248 Lavender Hill, SW11. **Details: Harry Zutshi 01-675 1913.**

WED 1 JUNE

LONDON 'Lead Free Petrol – When?' Meeting hosted by British Society for Social Responsibility in Science. 6.30pm, 9 Poland Street, W1. **Org The Conservation Society. Details: Jill Runnette 01-946 7542.**

LONDON 'A new dynamic for Arms Control?' – one in a series of summer talks on Wed. eves. 6.30pm, St James's Church, 197 Piccadilly, W1. Tonight: Philip Windsor of LSE. **Org DUNAMIS. Details: Nigel Pearce 01-437 6851.**

THURS 2 JUNE

LONDON 'The Limits of Local State Intervention' – critical discussion of the GLC's Economic Strategy. 8pm, The Wheatsheaf, Rathbone Pl, W1. **Org Conference of Socialist Economists. Details: Trevor Evans 01-607 9615.**

HORNSEY 'Nuclear weapons – where our candidates stand'. All election candidates invited. Public meeting 7pm, Hornsey Town Hall, The Broadway, N8. **Org. Hornsey/Wood Green CND Election Campaign Committee.**

FORTHCOMING

3 JUNE Chalfont St Giles Forum 'Nuclear Weapons – what does your church think?' 7.45pm, Jordans Meeting House. **Org S. Chiltern Peace Group. Details: Chalfont St Giles 5538.**

3 JUNE Northampton Arts Centre. 'Change the world it needs it' – Study weekend on Berthold Brecht. Starts 7pm. **Details: Northampton College of Further Education 0604-403322.**

4 JUNE Leicester Conf. on 'Active Birth' at Moat Community College. Top Spkrs with local mothers, fathers, midwives etc. Video of French clinic of Dr Michel Odent followed by discn. **Details: Janet Peacock 0533-766439.**

4 JUNE Manchester 'Keep Manchester Nuclear-Free, Stop Cruise in '83'. Albert Square rally. Spkrs incl E. P. Thompson, Pat Arrowsmith, Illtyd Harrington. Street theatre in city centre. **Org Greater Manchester CND and Manchester City Council. Details: Bob Walder 061-431 4337.**

4 JUNE Wolverhampton 'A Voice of our Own' – Philosophy and aims of British Council of Orgs. of Disabled People (BCODP). Day conf. arranged by and for disabled people. **Booking/-details: Francine White 0902-761056.**

6 JUNE London 'Flashpoints in International Conflict'. Course begins at Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queen Sq, WC1. 12.30-2pm for six weeks. Cost £4.50. **Details: 01-831 7711.**

7 JUNE Wandsworth 'Springfield Hospital in the 1990s'. Public Meeting, 7.30pm Penfold Centre, 1 Neville Gill Close, SW18 (rear of Arndale Centre). Adm. free. **Org Wandsworth Assoc. of Mental Health.**

7 JUNE London 'Beyond the status illusion' – 3rd Hertha Orgler Memorial Lecture by James Hemming PhD. 8pm The Community Rooms, 36-50 Millman St, WC1. **Org Adlerian Society of Gt Britain. Details: 01-789 8086.**

8 JUNE Hampstead 'Election Eve Special – night of poetry and music' incl. Adrian Mitchell, Carol Ann Duffy. 8pm Rosslyn Hill Chapel, Rosslyn Hill, NW3. **Org Kentish Town CND.**

9 JUNE London 'The Prison system: new perspectives'. Course of 6 evg sessions. Tutor: Maureen Waugh, 7.45-9.15pm, Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queen Sq, WC1. £3.50 ILEA res./£5.00 out of county, concessions unemployed. **Details: 01-831 7711.**

8 JUNE London 'Pembridge Poets'. Gavin Ewart. 8pm The Kensington Bookshop, 140 Church St, W8. Adm. £1 at door. **Org London Poetry Secretariat/Kensington and Chelsea Arts Council.**

9 JUNE Oxford 'Life Tasks for 1984 – Personal choices and decisions'. Weekend Workshop at St Hilda's College. **Org Adlerian Soc. of Gt Britain. Details: 01-789 8086.**

18-19 JUNE London Second summer seminar – an intensive training weekend for women working in the caring professions. Theme: 'Working with women – how can we apply psychodynamic theory'. **Closing date for applications 22 May. SAE to: Janet Nicolson, Women's Therapy Centre, 6 Manor Gardens, N7.**

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad. under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.

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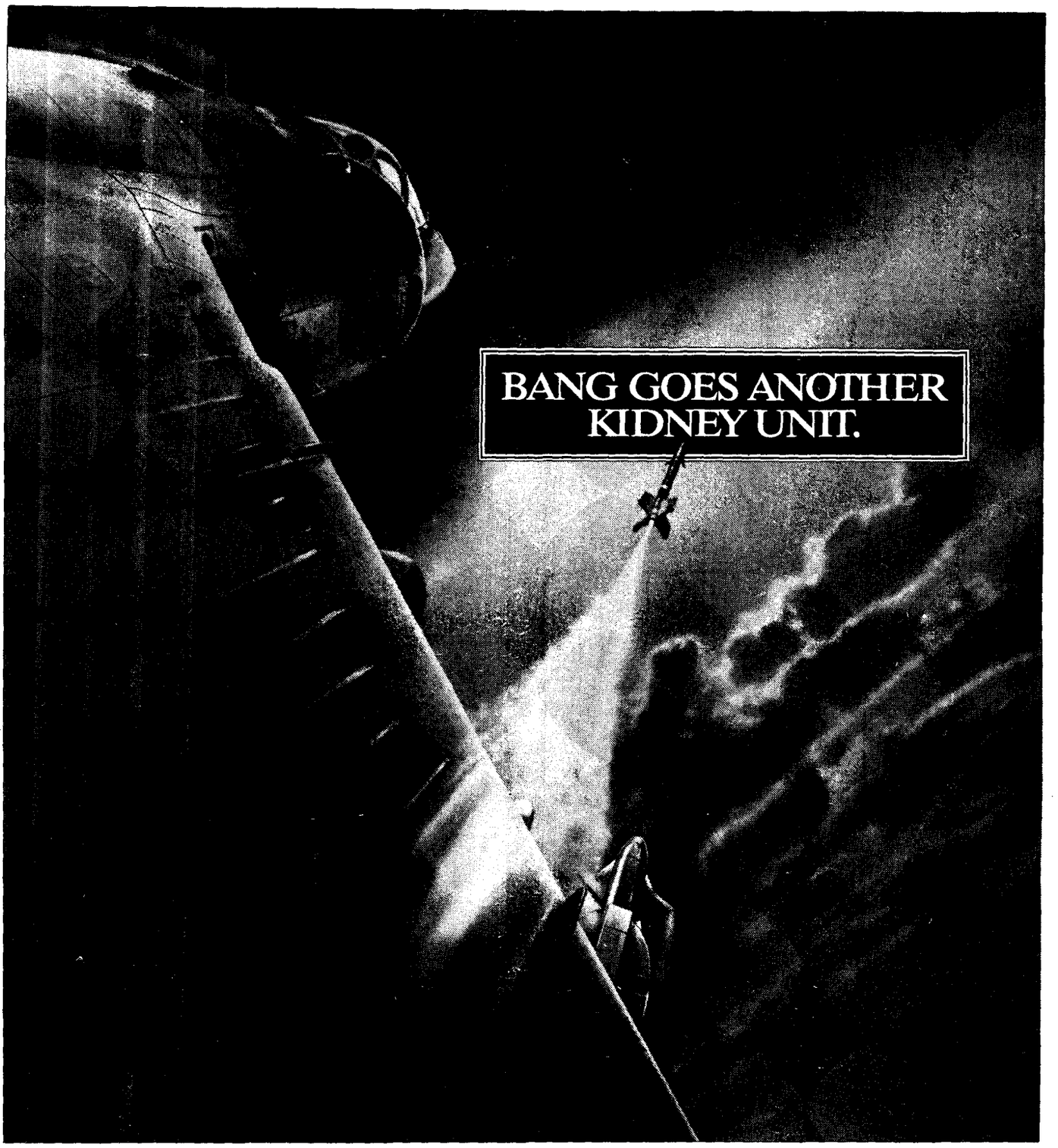

A kidney unit costs about £15,000. They won't say what an air-to-air missile costs. But a simple anti-tank missile is about £7,000.

And it's not just kidney units that are going up in smoke.

The Government spends nearly eight times as much on defence research as medical research.

And that's the least of your worries.

Newly built hospitals are keeping wards shut because the Government won't give them enough money to run properly.

Since 1979 Government policies have forced 90 hospitals to close down.

Over 13,000 beds have gone out of the window since 1979. Common sense will tell you there aren't 13,000 fewer sick people.

If everyone who's waiting for an operation were to stand in one long queue, it would stretch for close on 200 miles.

But none of this really has to happen.

This Government claims we haven't got any more money to increase spending on the health service.

Want to know the real truth?

It just isn't high enough on their list to warrant the extra cash that's needed.

Defence is. And that is why from 1981 to 1984 spending on defence will have risen by 30%.

For a country that isn't supposed to have any money, don't you think it's amazing what we're spending it on?

PUT PEOPLE FIRST.

IF THIS GETS YOUR VOTE MAKE SURE YOU USE IT.

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